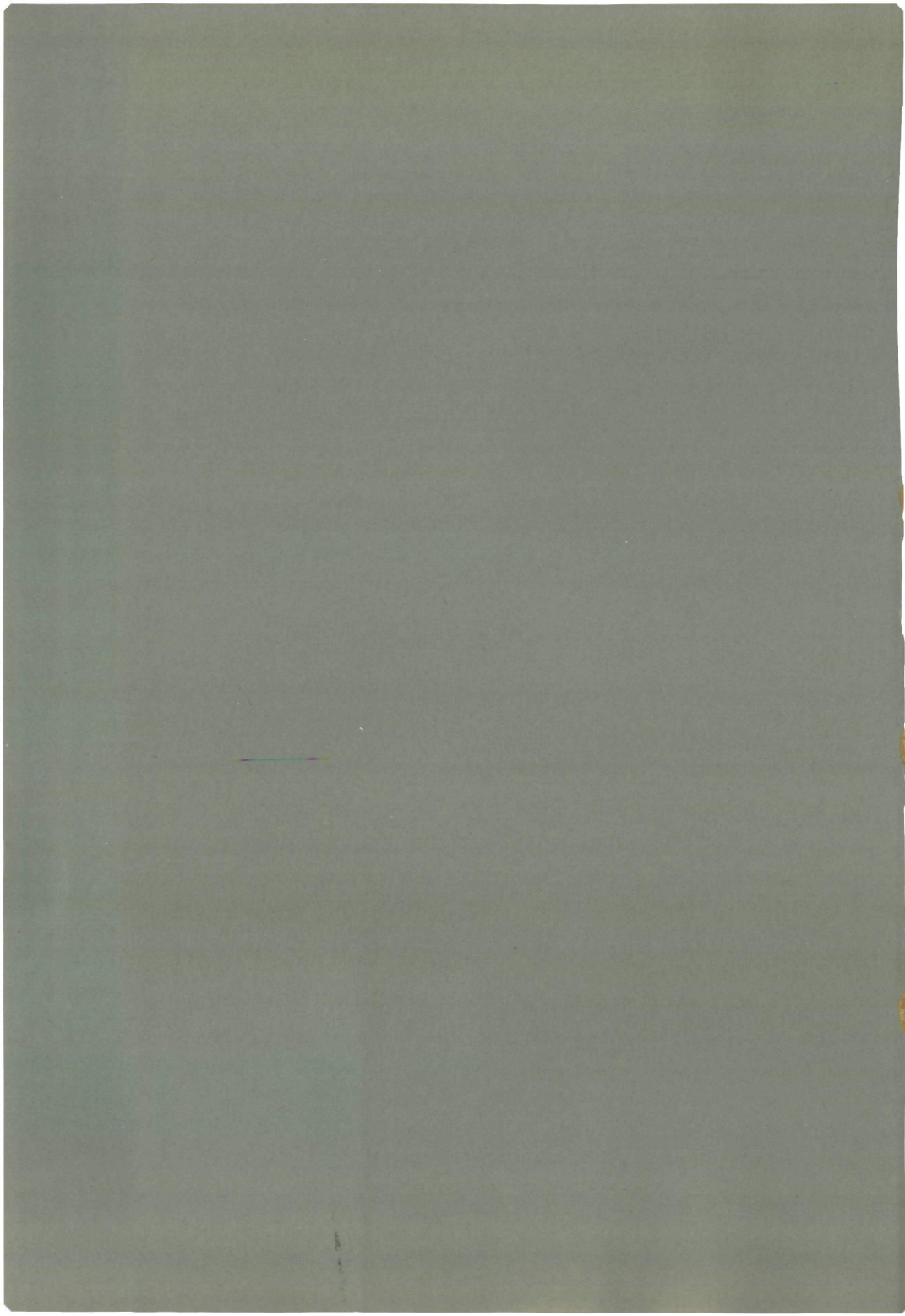


# **POIETIKON PRAGMA**

**Isocrates' theory of rhetorical composition**

**With a rhetorical commentary on the *Helen***

**JEROEN ADRIËN EVERARD BONS**



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een wetenschappelijke proeve op het gebied van de Letteren

## **PROEFSCHRIFT**

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## *Preface*

*The text of Isocrates used in this dissertation is the one printed in the Loeb series. It is based on the edition of Baiter-Sauppe (1839), the most conservative critical edition of this author.*

*Translations of primary source material are my own, unless stated otherwise. These translations have no literary aspirations whatsoever, but are merely intended as evidence for the interpretations offered.*

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## I. Isocrates as writer of discourse

This chapter serves as an introduction to the terminological studies in chapters II-IV and the commentary on Isocrates' *Helen* in chapter V. First, a general introduction to the central question of this dissertation will be offered, together with a summary of the scholarly work on Isocrates. Both general issues and the particular issue of his theorizing on rhetorical method will be addressed. The question of the character and intention of Isocrates' published discourses will also receive attention. Secondly, the *corpus isocrateum* as such will be placed in its broader context of Greek literary history. The consequences of the use of writing in the production and publication of literary works is part of this history. Finally, specific problems will be formulated to which the following chapters seek to provide answers.

### 1. the *status quaestionis*

Isocrates of Athens (436-338 BC) belongs to the Canon of Attic Orators. In antiquity and in later periods, when rhetoric was a broadly respected and practiced discipline, his works were influential, both for their stylistic exemplariness and their moral content.<sup>1</sup> He became famous as a teacher and educator: his school with its educational programme based on rhetoric was highly successful, and his doctrines inspired later authors.<sup>2</sup> For the most part his oeuvre consists of discourses of varied character, which have a common feature of content: in different ways they are all concerned with issues of "political life", i.e. the life of members of the πόλις-community.

Scholarly research on Isocrates began in the latter half of the 19th century. Philologists were first and foremost interested in his importance as a rhetorical writer, and this interest resulted in studies of his style and mastery of formal rhetorical rules. Isocrates' place in the

<sup>1</sup> See Hubbell (1913), Marrou (1960), 121-2. Isocrates was "l'éducateur de la Grèce du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle et, après elle, du monde hellénistique et romain", see also Finley (1975), esp. 195-202.

<sup>2</sup> On Isocrates' school see Usher (1990), 7-10 with bibliography, a concept fundamental to his thinking was that of λόγος (the word as instrument of both internal and external human communication) as a civilizing force *Nic.* 5-9 (= *Antid.* 253-258), followed by Cicero *Inu.* 1,2,2-5, *De orat.* 1,8,32-3, *Quint. IO* II,16,9.

retorical tradition was addressed, and his relations with predecessors and other teachers of rhetoric became subjects of inquiry.<sup>3</sup> Also in the 19th century there was growing attention to the political tendency of Isocrates' published works and attempts were made to assess his influence from that perspective.<sup>4</sup>

The interpretations by mostly German scholars were challenged by more critical approaches published in the last fifty years. Isocrates' political works were now seen as attempts to influence contemporary politics and as reflections of the views and ideals of a specific and identifiable group: the conservative bourgeois opposition in 4th century Athens. Thus his works came to be regarded as propagandistic and partisan, and his school was viewed as a training institution for conservative politicians.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the content of his writings received more and more negative evaluation. He was presented as an author of little originality and lacking incentive for serious thought.<sup>6</sup>

The publication in 1958 of Buchner's analysis of the *Panegyricus* marks a new approach in the scholarship on Isocrates. Buchner attempted to address the important issue of Isocrates' supposed inconsistency in his political inclinations. Jaeger had argued earlier that Isocrates proved himself to advocate Athenian imperialism in his discourses *Panegyricus* and *Areopagiticus*, but that he changed his mind as a result of the Social War and urged peace and the abandonment of the naval empire in his *On the Peace*. This interpretation was challenged by Buchner. He presents a new analysis of the *Panegyricus* and uses a method of interpretation that consists of a preliminary study of the particular features of the discourse's structure and composition as a necessary condition for establishing a balanced and informed analysis of the discourse itself. In doing so, he acknowledges the significance of formal elements for understanding a discourse's content. The necessity to do so was already emphasized by Isocrates himself. More than others before him, Buchner is aware that Isocrates produces in the *Panegyricus* a

<sup>3</sup> See Blass (1892), 101-213; Norden (1958), 113-123; on Isocrates and his relations with contemporary philosophers see Eucken (1983) with extensive discussion and bibliography.

<sup>4</sup> See Bringmann (1965), 13-19; Harding (1973), 137-138.

<sup>5</sup> Bringmann (1965) is an example of such an approach; see also Jacoby (1949), 74, 130; *FGH* 3b Suppl. 1, 87, 90; Jaeger (1940), 409-450.

<sup>6</sup> See e.g. O. Murray in Boardman *et al.* (1991), 272-273; an extremely critical view is expressed by Baynes (1955).

work that consists of a mixture of rhetorical genera (epideictic and deliberative) and that its separate parts should be interpreted by taking into consideration the different generic rules and conventions. Furthermore, he was able to show by studying the relevant terminology of the *Panegyricus* that Isocrates' opinion on the Athenian naval empire is consistent, and that there was no political change of heart on his part. As he convincingly shows, Isocrates is careful to distinguish between ἀρχή and ἡγεμονία, or between "empire" and "leadership". He dismisses the first as unsalutary for Athens, but advocates the latter as Athens' prerogative. The acknowledgment of this distinction solves the question of Isocrates' supposed inconsistent stand: it is now clear that he has not changed his views between the time of his *Panegyricus* and *On the Peace*.

The importance of this change of approach was that Buchner fully concentrated on the intrinsic qualities and characteristics of Isocrates' discourse as a work of literary rhetoric. Similar to Buchner's approach are the contributions by Heilbrunn (1977) and Race (1978). Heilbrunn, in a reaction to Kennedy's interpretation of the *Helen* (1958), offers a detailed analysis of the proemium and convincingly shows that the discourse in its entirety cannot be described as a panhellenistic document. Rather, it is a piece of rhetorical writing in the encomiastic tradition. Although he does not pursue the potentialities of the encomium as serious writing, and therefore falls short in his interpretation, it is to Heilbrunn's credit that he takes full account of the discourse's complexities. Race points out the rhetorical subtlety in Isocrates' use of digression in the *Panathenaicus*. The excursus on Agamemnon is shown to have a dual function: it is both an epideictic encomium and constitutes a defensive forensic argument at the same time. By amplification of Spartan atrocities, Isocrates succeeds in diverting the attention from Athenian ones.

For a long time Eucken (1983) offered the only modern monograph on Isocrates. It is surprising that this thorough study of the connections between Isocrates and his contemporary colleagues and rivals in the field of education, among whom was Plato, has received so little attention. Eucken dealt extensively with the struggle between Isocrates, Plato, and other contemporaries in the field of education over the principles to be preferred. In order to describe each of the opponents' positions, Eucken analyzed with precision the relevant works by these

authors and endeavoured to reconstruct the altercations between them. Without detracting from the merits of this publication on other points (of which the establishment of Isocrates as participant in the philosophical debate of his time stands out as most important), one can refer to a specific shortcoming: in dealing with the Isocratean source material, Eucken never showed himself concerned with the problems they can provide, being rhetorically composed works of literature. In the words of reviewer Hudson-Williams (1985), it would have been better "if (Eucken) had made a more general study of Isocrates' method of composition".

Hudson-Williams was not the first to point to that particular deficiency in the scholarship on Isocrates. Earlier there had been publications concerned with his rhetorical technique, but these tended to restrict themselves to matters of style. The most important contribution was provided by Wersdörfer (1940), who studied Isocratean technical rhetorical terminology in the context of his general philosophy of education. His work consists of two parts. The first contains an attempt to define the meaning of the most important technical terms (πρέπον, καινόν, ἰδέα, καιρός) and their synonyms. This part concludes with an interpretation of *Against the sophists* with the help of results obtained so far. The second part contains what could be called the reconstruction of an Isocratean περὶ λέξεως: a synthesis of his theory of style and diction. Although this study is conducted thoroughly by an examination of context and similar instances, it is unsatisfactory. First, it is mainly concerned with matters of style and diction, and does not treat Isocratean views on the earlier stages of finding arguments and of arranging them as separate categories. Furthermore, Wersdörfer is inclined to treat terms that seem very similar in meaning and whose semantic range may indeed partly coincide, as synonyms. In doing so he deprives himself of the possibility to reach a higher level of exactitude in the definition of terms.<sup>7</sup> This is to be regretted, because it is evident that Isocrates does not yet have a fully developed technical terminology. A certain amount of vagueness is present and can be explained by the fact that Isocrates occupies a place in the early stages in the history of rhetorical theory. For that very reason considerable exactitude in the definition of terms and their semantic demarcation is called for: only that way can the

<sup>7</sup> See Sicking (1963), 232 n. 3; Zucker (1942), 16-17; see also p. 78.

different stages of terminological development be identified. This being the case, the work by Wersdörfer might be improved upon, first by including invention and arrangement in the scope of a new investigation, and secondly to attempt greater precision in the semantic demarcation between closely related terms.

A valuable attempt at evaluating Isocrates' position in the history of rhetoric and his theoretical notions was provided by Steidle (1952), who investigated his ideas on rhetoric and education in an unbiased way. Steidle studied the technical terminology used by Isocrates in its immediate context and in the wider perspective of literary history. In doing so he is able to show the elements of originality in Isocrates' educational programme and its philosophical basis by distinguishing it from contributions by the sophists and Plato. The main conclusion reached by Steidle, that Isocrates occupies an important independent place in the history of rhetoric, is taken as one of the starting points of this dissertation.

An investigation into Isocrates' theory and practice of composition, that is to say the stages εὑρεσις and τάξις as they were defined in later rhetorical theory, would be welcome for two reasons. First, seen against the background of literary history in general, a description of his methods and their applications may elucidate the differences and common features between Isocrates himself and his predecessors, both poets and writers of prose. Secondly, such an investigation could contribute to attempts made to identify the exact place Isocrates holds in the history of rhetoric. Since a clear definition of his achievements in this respect is missing, the issue of his position can not be addressed satisfactorily. At the same time there is strong evidence that he played a major role: Cicero and Quintilian mention Isocrates and those in his tradition as a separate group of rhetoricians next to the Aristotelians.<sup>8</sup> The gap in scholarship was pointed out explicitly by Solmsen (1941), who made it clear that filling that gap is difficult because "for the history of the Isocratean tradition we lack a starting point of the same solidity and authenticity as Aristotle's three books on rhetoric" (p. 36). No τέχνη or manual by Isocrates is extant (and probably there never was one written by him, see below § 3), so therefore Solmsen called for "a thorough and at the same time cautious analysis of

<sup>8</sup> Cic. *Inv.* II,2,8; Quint. *IO* III,1,14 f.; see Hubbell (1919), 40.



Isocrates' "speeches" from the technical point of view" (*ibid.*). The issue of the Isocratean tradition involves in the first instance the relations between Isocrates and his predecessors, the sophists, and between him and his near contemporaries like Plato and Alcidas. Then there is the relationship between Isocrates and Aristotle, who was seen by antiquity as representing a rival tradition in rhetoric. The answer to the question what the "Isocratea ratio" in later rhetoric consisted of can, however, only be given when a full account of the theory and practice as it emerges from his writings is offered.

A recent attempt to define Isocrates' place as a rhetorical theorist has been made by Gaines (1990). Although his reconstruction of Isocrates' technical precepts for the parts of the speech cannot be accepted as such (see p. 34 f., below), Gaines deserves credit for identifying the preliminary stage of "intellection" in the process of invention and, most of all, for providing evidence that Isocrates' reputation in antiquity as a rhetorical theorist can be sustained. This indicates that the investigation as proposed by Solmsen (1941) should indeed be undertaken.

Prior to answering the questions involved in that investigation by providing a new analysis of theoretical passages in Isocrates' published works, a number of preliminary issues must be dealt with. First, in § 2 the nature and general character of his works will be discussed in more detail. Then § 3 is concerned with the presumed absence of a handbook (τέχνη) by Isocrates. And finally § 4 discusses how the transition from orality to literacy has a bearing on understanding Isocrates.

Recently Too (1995) has provided a new monograph on Isocrates. Here a fresh reading of the author and his works is offered from the perspective of contemporary strategies of reading as proposed by literary criticism and theory. The drawback of Too's method is that theory regularly appears to override the analysis of primary source material. The study contains an attempt at an overall assessment of the author Isocrates and his oeuvre and the way his works are to be read. It does not address the issues studied here, and therefore will receive only incidental attention.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> For my review of Too (1995) see *Mnemosyne* (forthcoming).

## 2. The nature of Isocrates' publications

Here the more general issue of how to understand Isocrates' works as such must be addressed, i.e. finding an answer to the question why he wrote at all. Scholars who provided an answer to this question can be divided in three groups. First, there are those who interpret Isocrates' publications as contributions to the political debate of his time, either in the narrow sense of political pamphleteering or as distanced commentary (see above, p. 1-2). Secondly, a group of scholars regard Isocrates first and foremost as a writer with philosophical inclination. Although he rejects speculative inquiries like Plato's, he is interested in the practical philosophy, which concerns itself with the principles of speaking and acting well, and he tries to provide what could be called an ethics based on common sense and experience. The most important representatives of this group are Jaeger (1943), Mikkola (1954) and Eucken (1983).

Thirdly, a renewed interest in the history of rhetoric, prompted primarily by the scholarly work of G.A. Kennedy, provided possibilities for a fresh assessment of Isocrates. The new tendency was to concentrate less on matters of historical and philosophical interest, and more to the consequences of the acknowledgement that Isocrates is a rhetorical writer. This shift of focus resulted in publications such as those of Buchner (1958), Heilbrunn (1977) and Race (1978). It also resulted in an interpretation as offered by Harding (1973), who argues that Isocrates might be primarily a sophistic writer engaged in subtle rhetorical play and using historical contexts for reasons of dramatic verisimilitude. Thus he maintains that the *Archidamus* and *On the Peace* are, in fact, antilogical discourses in the sophistic tradition, intended to argue both sides of a question, and unconnected with any specific historical circumstances.

This raises the fundamental question of why Isocrates wrote. Was his intention purely sophistical in the restricted, negative sense? Did he produce with his discourses pieces of epideictic rhetoric of no serious consequence? The answer must be in the negative, as can be concluded from the following points.

First of all, to qualify a piece of writing as epideictic should not be taken to mean that it is without serious intent. As Aristotle comments on the γένος ἐπιδεικτικόν, it takes the form of praise or blame, is concerned

with the present and has as its subject the honourable and disgraceful.<sup>10</sup> These subjects are more general than those of judicial and deliberative rhetoric: they deal with the more particular and pragmatic subjects of what is just and unjust or of what is expedient and harmful, each in a certain case. Epideictic is therefore essentially concerned with moral issues, even though it is ceremonial and has solemn occasions as its natural context. One must keep in mind that in this genre there are texts such as the *ἐπιτάφιος λόγος*, i.e. a speech presented at a public meeting and intended to express commonly shared communal values. As such, an epideictic speech can be instrumental in the inculcation of communal values and even in influencing behaviour. This potential made epideictic relevant also to Plato: he recognized its moralistic function and acknowledges it as a potentially valid branch of philosophical rhetoric.<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, in its didactic function epideictic rhetoric could claim to be the successor to paraenetic poetry. This claim seems justified on the basis of two observations: first, epideictic prose is indebted to poetry for its embellished diction and style. The liaison between poetry and epideictic was established by Gorgias, whose prose-style is characterized in terms otherwise applied to the elevated style of Aeschylean tragedy.<sup>12</sup> Secondly, epideictic often draws on themes traditionally used by poets for its subject-matter. Again, Gorgias, who wrote discourses on Helen and Palamedes, provides evidence.<sup>13</sup> Thirdly, what could be called "protreptic mythical eulogy" is a common feature of both paraenetic poetry and epideictic prose, and therefore provides a clear indication that both shared teaching as a purpose.<sup>14</sup> This particular point is borne out by both the content and formal features of Isocrates' paraenetic discourses *To Nicocles* and *Nicocles*: they contain lessons to the young prince and

<sup>10</sup> Ar. *Rh* I,3, 1358 a 36 f; 1358 b 12 f, see Grimaldi (1980), 81-82 *ad* 1358 b 8-29.

<sup>11</sup> See Duffy (1983), 87 f, Carter (1991), 209-232.

<sup>12</sup> See O'Sullivan (1992), 74 f.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Protagoras' use of the myth of Prometheus in Pl. *Prot.* 320 c f, Prodicus' story about Heracles on the crossroads in Xen. *Mem.* II,1,21-34.

<sup>14</sup> See Ch. IV, 140-141, see Greene (1951), 33-34, North (1952), 1-7, Burgess (1902), 166 f, on poetry as education see Nagy (1989), 1-77, esp. 69-77, on the general issue of the sophistic tradition and its interest in ancient poetry see Verdenius (1981), 127 & nn. 64-66.

his subjects and in their sequential listing of specific pieces of advice resemble the gnomic poetry of the *corpus Theognideum*.<sup>15</sup>

In principle, therefore, seriousness is a feature of epideictic rhetoric. That it was used for reasons of showing virtuosity and display of rhetorical abilities is not inconsistent with this view. Gorgias' *Helen* may be referred to as a case in point: the fact that the author qualifies his discourse as "play" (§ 21: ἐμὸν δὲ παίγνιον) should not result in believing that it has no serious intent. The defense of *Helen* as such is, of course, playful in the sense that it serves no immediate practical purpose. But because of the general applicability of the categories of arguments used, the discourse becomes a study of valid and invalid argumentation, and thereby gains philosophical qualities. In its conception as a speech for the defense in a fictitious case, Gorgias' *Helen* is amusing, but not trivial.<sup>16</sup> In its ambivalent character, moreover, it is also a specimen of discourse exemplifying Gorgias' statements on the power of λόγος<sup>17</sup>.

Generally speaking, in epideictic rhetoric the boundaries between play and seriousness cannot always be clearly drawn. In fact, playfulness seems to have been a quality explicitly claimed by the sophists: it was part of their preferred methods in propagating their tenets. Intellectual virtuosity and sharpness can be stimulated or proven by being successful in verbal games and puzzles. Thus playing and learning go together and can even be seen as complementary activities. Thus it is quite understandable that Theaetetus admits to the Stranger from Elea that the Sophist is "one of those whose province is play" (Pl. *Soph.* 235 a 6: τῶν τῆς παιδιᾶς μετεχόντων ἐστὶ τις...εἷς).<sup>18</sup> The functionality of play in the process of acquiring knowledge is further recognized by the philosopher Plato himself. In the *Parmenides* 137 b 2 Parmenides, when forced to take a stand on the question of existence, calls this assignment "a difficult game to play": πραγματεῖωδὴ παιδιὰν

<sup>15</sup> Note that *Nic.* 43 explicitly refers to the gnomic poets Hesiod, Theognis and Phocylides as the "best counselors of human conduct"

<sup>16</sup> See Rutherford (1995), 203-204, Huizinga (1956), 142-148, for further examples of the sophistic παίγνιον see the Lysianic *Eroticus* in Plato's *Phdr.*, the Isocretan *Busiris* (see esp. its c. 9), Agathon's contribution in Plato's *Symposium*, which Agathon concludes by qualifying it as τὰ μὲν παιδιᾶς, τὰ δὲ σπουδῆς μετρίως μετέχων

<sup>17</sup> See Robinson (1973), 53 "(the *Helen* is) a vehicle for certain general ideas that are deserving of attention. To this extent at least it should be taken seriously"

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Socrates' critique of the unserious intentions of the playful methods used by Euthydemus and Dionysiodorus in Pl. *Euthyd.* 283 b 3, 287 b 1 f. these disputationists only propose trick questions that do not contribute to learning about the essence of things

παίξειν. He then proceeds to discuss this issue with profundity and seriousness, although the discussion has the form of an exchange of questions and answers, during which the issue is looked upon from different angles.<sup>19</sup>

Against this general background Isocrates' statements on the intention of his works gain greater prominence. He is explicit on his relative position in the field of rhetoric: the part of his oeuvre he considers relevant are the "scholastic" discourses. These are the discourses he published after the establishment of his school at about 392 BC. He considers his career as a publicist and teacher to begin at that point, and he dismisses his activities prior to that event (XV, 36, 161-162). These scholastic discourses are not deliberative nor forensic, even if they sometimes adopt their outward form. But they differ from them: his discourses are stylistically more elaborate and have as their subject not the incidental but rather issues of a general and more elevated kind.<sup>20</sup> He claims φιλοσοφία as the occupation by which he can distinguish himself from rivals. His field is the "philosophy of discourse" (IV, 10: ἡ περὶ τοὺς λόγους φιλοσοφία), which is different, on the one hand, from abstract philosophizing (X, 1-5; see Ch. V, *ad loc.*), and, on the other, from the formalized art of rhetoric (XIII, 9-13). It is, positively defined, the reflection on the common opinions and practices of the *polis* community (XIII, 21; XV, 46, 260), hence the qualification of his discourses as πολιτικοὶ λόγοι.

These considerations make it clear that Isocrates' discourses are meant to be taken seriously.<sup>21</sup> They serve as the only source for the study of his ideas. This general conclusion paves the way for a careful analysis of his works, in search of answers to the questions formulated above. First, however, the specific character of these discourses must be established as precisely as possible.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *Parm.* 142 b f., 155 e f., 165 e f.; on the "play" element in Plato's philosophy see Rutherford (1995), 268-270.

<sup>20</sup> See Wilcox (1946) on these features of distinction; see also Hudson-Williams (1949), 65-66.

<sup>21</sup> Harding's position is convincingly attacked from the historian's point of view by Moysey (1982); the issue of using the works of the orators as historical source material is considered in general terms by Todd (1990) and Davidson (1990), esp. 20-21.

### 3. Discourses as means of instruction.

By founding his school Isocrates sought a way to disseminate his views on what constituted a serious and respectable form of rhetoric and he tried to educate pupils according to that concept. There is, however, no extant handbook or *τέχνη* by him, in which his ideas on the theory and practice of his rhetorical education are systematically presented. There exists a number of fragments belonging to such a *τέχνη* supposedly written by him, but they can not be ascribed to him with any certainty.<sup>22</sup> The absence of a handbook may be due to the possibility that there never existed such a handbook. For that possibility some evidence exists.<sup>23</sup>

a) Isocrates himself declares in his programmatic discourse *Against the sophists*, published about 390 BC when he began his career as head of his school<sup>24</sup>, that he opposes the formulation of hard and fast rules for rhetorical composition. The teaching of rhetoric, he writes, is a *ποιητικὸν πρᾶγμα* or creative activity rather than a *τεταγμένη τέχνη* as offered by his rivals, the sophists (c. 12). Thus he would have acted inconsistently with his own teaching had he produced a *τέχνη* of his own.

At this point, further remarks on this particular discourse may be relevant. The text seems to be fragmentary: the closing chapter (22) contains an announcement that it will be possible to show that the critique of rivals is justified, and that the programme, which so far has been only described in general terms, is feasible. This might lead one to think that the extant text is, in fact, a proemium to a main text now lost.<sup>25</sup> From the perspective of content, however, the text can stand on its own. Two explanations have been offered to account for the present state of the text as intended by Isocrates. Eucken interprets the open ended text as an invitation to inquire for more information by becoming a pupil in Isocrates' school. His suggestion is followed by Cahn, who adds another

<sup>22</sup> For the fragments see Radermacher (1951), 153-163 (Isocrates B XXIV 1-36).

<sup>23</sup> On the following see Brown (1914), 22-24, Barwick (1963), Eucken (1983), 27 f., Cahn (1989).

<sup>24</sup> This date for XIII depends on two considerations: 1) Isocrates says at XV, 194 before citing from this text that it belongs to the early stage of his activity as teacher, 2) in XIII, 13 and 19 he distances himself from forensic rhetoric and thereby implicitly from his own logography: the last forensic speeches of his (XVIII and XIX) date from about 390 BC. Therefore the start of his scholastic career can be dated from ca. 390 BC onwards. See Blass (1892), 230, 235 f., Drerup (1906), cxxv, cxxvi f., RE IX, 2165, 2167 [Münscher], Mathieu - Bremond (1956), 91 f., Eucken (1983), 5.

<sup>25</sup> The closing chapter is indeed constructed as a transitional passage: cf. X, 15, XI, 9, IV, 51, see Blass (1892), 240 f., Eucken (1983), 6.

argument in its abrupt end at the very point where a specific formulation of Isocratean rules is expected, the text underscores in its form the point made by the author. According to Isocrates, one should not endeavour to determine what is essentially variable.<sup>26</sup> That tenet is his particular contribution to the ongoing debate on the status of rhetoric as a discipline. In this view the discourse can be characterized as iconic: its form reflects its content.<sup>27</sup>

b) The passages XIII, 14-18, XV, 180-192 and XII, 200-265 allow a reconstruction of Isocrates' methods of teaching and the school curriculum. It becomes clear that there must have been a few pupils at a time, who received individual tuition.<sup>28</sup> They were involved in composing discourses and discussing these among themselves and with their teacher. These discussions apparently involved matters of style and structure, argumentation and selection of subject-matter. From this it can be deduced that Isocrates saw education as a process of correction, which not only consisted in the master correcting his pupil but also in group-criticism. Evidently discussion lies at the basis of this method, in which there was little room for the mechanical application of handbook rules.<sup>29</sup>

c) The practice of using (parts of) discourses as study material in rhetorical education conformed with the use of model speeches by the sophists. Gorgias' rhetorical instruction seems to have consisted in the presentation of exemplary speeches to be learnt by heart by his pupils. These speeches could be described as stores of arguments concerning a general issue, and from these the speaker was to make a selection in a given particular case.<sup>30</sup> Similarly Isocrates seems to have used his own discourses as texts to be studied in his school. The discussion between Isocrates and a pupil in the *Panathenaicus* can be adduced as evidence for

<sup>26</sup> Cahn (1989), 127-137

<sup>27</sup> See Ch. V, p. 185 f

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Cic. *De orat.* III, 9, 35-36: etenim videmus ex eodem quasi ludo ( ) exisse discipulos dissimilis inter se ac tamen laudandos, cum ad cuiusque naturam institutio doctoris adcommodaretur. Cuius est vel maxime insigne illud exemplum ( ) quod dicebat Isocrates doctor singularis se calcibus in Ephoro, contra autem in Theopompo frenis uti solere.

<sup>29</sup> On Isocrates' school and educational practice see Burk (1923), Johnson (1957) and (1959), the practice of oral instruction constitutes a parallel with Plato's Academy; see Greene (1951), 46-50.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Ar. *Soph. el.* 33, 183 b 36 - 184 a 8, *Rh.* III, 17, 1418 a 32-37, *Pol.* I, 13, 1260 a 21-28, Isoc. XI, 48: the rhetor Polycrates is said to have composed his discourse on *Business as παράδειγμα*: ὡς χρή περὶ τῶν αἰσχυρῶν αἰτιῶν καὶ δυσχερῶν πραγμάτων ποιῆσθαι τὰς ἀπολογίας, cf. Pl. *Menex.* 236 a 8 - b 4, cf. Cic. *Brut.* 46-48, Quint. *IO.* II, 17, 4, see Wilcox (1943), 13, Cole (1991), 82-88, see also Ch. IV, 121 n. 50.



this belief This didactic procedure practised by Isocrates can also account for the occurrence of passages containing reflections on matters of rhetorical technique in many other discourses than only the explicitly programmatic ones Thus his discourses can be referred to as λόγοι διδασκαλικοί καὶ τεχνικοί artful and instructive discourses (XII, 271)

This evidence leads to the conclusion that Isocrates probably did not write a manual, but used his own discourses as study material or παραδείγματα in his school The tradition that he wrote such a manual might originate in the confusion between the terms τέχνη and τέχνηαι The plural τέχνηαι can refer to rhetorical exercises, and could therefore be used of Isocrates' discourses as well<sup>31</sup> The case of the *Helen* is perhaps the clearest example of such an instructive discourse as this study will show, it contains theoretical reflections on rhetorical rules and method, and serves as an exemplary specimen or paradeigm of Isocratean rhetoric

#### 4. Isocrates as author of written discourses.

Another important point to be considered with respect to the nature of Isocrates' discourses is the general context of Greek literary history During the 4th century BC the use of writing became a significant element in the production of literature, both in its conceptual stages and in its means of publication and reception Evidence for this process can be found among writers of philosophy and rhetoric Plato's highly critical attitude towards writing, for example, can be seen in this context, and in rhetoric, the old orally based and extemporary way of speech making was defended by Alcidas<sup>32</sup>

Isocrates himself is explicit in distinguishing his position His statements concerning methods of production and publication show clearly that his authorship was profoundly influenced by these new developments He claims, in short, to be a writer, writing for a reading

<sup>31</sup> Barwick (1963), 50, In this sense τέχνηαι seems to be used in Speus *Ep Socr* XXX (*Ep ad Phil.*), 4, 10 see E Bickermann - Joh Sykutris, *Speusipps Brief an König Philipp Text, Übersetzung, Untersuchungen*, Leipzig 1928 (Ber Verh d Sach Akad d Wiss, phil-hist Klasse, Bd 80, H 3), 59 *ad loc.*, see also Radermacher (1951), 156 *ad* no 16, Steidle (1954), 279 n 2

<sup>32</sup> In general see Thomas - Webb (1994), Bons (1993), 160-161 & n 1, 7, Thomas (1992), 3-4, 124 f, 161-2, for Plato see Havelock (1963), Connors (1986), 49-57, Andersen (1987), for Alcidas see Eucken (1983), 121-140, Vallozza (1985), O'Sullivan (1992), *passim*.

public<sup>33</sup>. As a consequence of this claim, the following points on his authorship deserve attention:

a) in V, 25-30 Isocrates stresses that there is a difference between discourses intended for oral delivery (λόγοι λεγόμενοι) and discourses to be read (λόγοι ἀναγιγώσκόμενοι). The difference consists in the means by which the discourse to be read can make up for the oral elements it lacks, such as the role the speaker with his authority and performance plays in the relation to the listening audience. A discourse to be read focuses less on performative characteristics such as rhythm and variety, and concentrates more on content. Its argumentation is more difficult to appreciate, and requires the exercise of reason and reflection (λογισμὸς καὶ φιλοσοφία) and is thus on a higher intellectual level. This involves the use of more advanced literary techniques both with regard to style and composition, and the text will therefore be more difficult to appreciate. At the same time, however, these features are a stimulus to attentive reading.<sup>34</sup>

b) The use of what can be called the written style involves a number of specific tendencies in the composition of a text, among which are logical structuring, linear development and explicitness of argumentation. More so than in orally based texts, one will find rationality reflected in style and composition. To this feature Isocrates himself refers in XV, 47 and especially in XII, 246, where the discussion between himself and the pupil criticizing the discourse at hand, draws attention to the hidden agenda that was consciously and intentionally applied. At the same time, however, ornamental stylistic devices are not absent in his works: they are a means conducive to persuasion by charm, but they are supplementary. Dionysius of Halicarnassus remarks that Isocrates' style is elevated, but not intended to create πάθος. The intended effects of the pathetical style like ψυχαγωγία and ἐκπληξίς, which are appropriate to the oral, poetic style, are explicitly dismissed by Isocrates himself (see e.g. II, 49 and IX, 10). This, also, conforms with the requirements of written prose.<sup>35</sup> The absence of πάθος even develops into a generic requirement for the encomium, as is observed by Longinus *Subl.* 8,3.

<sup>33</sup> See Jähne (1991); on the author-audience relationship in the case of Isocrates see now Usener (1994), 47 f.

<sup>34</sup> See p. 80-84; Bons (1993), 162-171.

<sup>35</sup> Dion. Hal. *De Isoc.* 2; on the features of the written, "scientific" prose style see Thesleff (1966), 89-113; see also O'Sullivan (1992), 71 f., 74 f., 82 f., esp. 100-102, 114 f.;

c) Isocrates' intended audience were educated readers (παιδευμένοι), who appreciated the quality and intellectual level of his works and consequently studied them in detail and part by part, if necessary.<sup>36</sup>

d) The use of writing enables an author to execute the careful preparation and revision needed to produce a text of the required intellectual level. In XII, 231 f. Isocrates gives some impression of that process, which involves rereading and reworking previously written segments, and reconsidering content and style. Such a process is laborious and calls for precision, and accounts for the great amount of time needed to finish a discourse (see, e.g., IV, 14). Moreover, this process makes the written text essentially different from the text to be performed: that genre requires spontaneity and living up to the moment. It is not surprising that Alcidas criticized those who produced discourses in the way Isocrates does. Because of the careful finish and precision this group of authors exercised in producing their works, Alcidas considers them "producers of discourse" rather than "effective speakers" (c.2: πολὺ δικαιότερον ἂν ποιητὰς ἢ σοφιστὰς προσαγορεύεσθαι; cf. c. 34: ῥήτωρ δεινός vs. ποιητὴς λόγων). Ποιητής "maker" seems a deliberate allusion to the activity of craftsmanship<sup>37</sup>. As will be seen later (Ch. III, p. 99 f.), Isocrates' use of the technical term καιρός is closely akin to the terminology of statuary. This would support the view that Alcidas has Isocrates or, at least, the Isocratean methods of rhetoric in mind.<sup>38</sup>

These features of Isocrates' activity as a writer of discourse suggest that he was influenced by Prodicus, maybe even more so than by Gorgias. The typically Gorgianic features of the oral style, such as emotionalism and linguistic imprecision, are absent as goals in themselves: the Gorgianic style in its well-known form of antitheses combined with assonance is subordinated to the requirements of writing.<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, the command over the tool of language as

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Sterdle (1952), 293-295, an instructive example of the rationality involved in using discourse is the advice Isocrates gives to Timotheus in XV, 132 f

<sup>36</sup> See V, 29, XII, 30-32, 136, 240, 246, XV, 12

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Alc. *Soph.* 12. written speeches are μᾶλλον ποιήμασιν ἢ λόγοις εὐκότες, cf. XV, 192, XIII, 15, Plato *Phdr.* 234 e 6; 236 d 5 ἀγαθὸν ποιητὴν, *Euthyd.* 305 b 4; *Legg.* IX, 858 c 6.

<sup>38</sup> On Alcidas see O'Sullivan (1992), *passim*, Rutoók (1991), Friemann (1990); Hudson-Williams (1951), for the introduction of ποιητής in literary context see Sperdau (1950) 220 n. 44, besides to statuary, the allusion might also be to Isocrates' close connection with the poetic tradition (see above, p. 6-7)

<sup>39</sup> See O'Sullivan (1996), 123 n. 26

required for the writer, as it emerges in the requirement of μετρίως λέγειν and in semantic precision (ὁρθότης), can be directly related to Prodicus.<sup>40</sup>

### 5. The issue: Isocrates' theory and practice of composition.

§§ 2-4 have provided the general framework for the issues formulated above. In his discourses Isocrates has produced a corpus of texts with serious intent, of instructive use, and written to be read. The establishment of this framework can lead to the delineation of texts within the *corpus Isocrateum*, which will be the source-material for analysis.

Two groups will be excluded: first, the forensic speeches XVI - XXI are not taken into consideration. On the basis of what Isocrates himself declares about these discourses, they must be regarded as untypical of what he considered to be his oeuvre. They belong to the period before the opening of the school, when he tried to make a career as logographer. From this period in his life he distances himself explicitly: he was not successful in public life and devoted his career to intellectual pursuits and to reflection on general issues of permanent value, forsaking petty matters such as private contracts and other subjects of the rhetors (XII, 11. ἐπειδὴ τοῦ πολιτεύεσθαι διήμαρτον, ἐπὶ τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν καὶ πονεῖν καὶ γράφειν ἃ διανοηθεῖν κατέφυγον, οὐ περὶ μικρῶν τὴν προαίρεσιν ποιούμενος οὐδὲ περὶ τῶν ἰδίων συμβολαίων οὐδὲ περὶ ὧν ἄλλοι τινὲς ληροῦσιν, ἀλλὰ περὶ τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν καὶ βασιλικῶν καὶ πολιτικῶν πραγμάτων).<sup>41</sup>

The second group of excluded texts are the letters. Since their authenticity remains debated, it does not seem justified to use them as primary source material. In some cases, however, it is possible to adduce

<sup>40</sup> For μετρίως λέγειν see Ch II, 51 *ad* Plato *Phdr* 267 b f, cf also *Resp* VII, 518 b 5, *Theaet* 191 d 1, cf XII, 171, an example of Isocratean ὁρθότης is the distinction between ἀπολογεῖσθαι and ἐκπαινεῖν in X, 14 (see Ch V, below *ad loc*), the connection Prodicus-Isocrates is made in antiquity cf D H *Isocr* 1, Photius *Cod* 260, Ps-Plut *Vit X Orat* 836, see Welcker, *Kleine Schriften II*, 393-541

<sup>41</sup> His failure in public life Isocrates ascribes to natural disabilities: the lack of a strong voice and self-assurance (XII, 10, V, 81). It is difficult to decide on the historical truth of this explanation: it occurs late in his career, the image of the self-assured man with strong voice might be intended as a depiction of what he distances himself from the democratic populist politician, and one might be dealing with an excuse *ex eventu*. If historically correct, the explanation reinforces the image Isocrates depicts of himself: the intellectual keeping a distance from public life and providing sound advice on fundamental issues. See Campbell (1984), Lateiner (1982-1983), on the distinction of prose genera see below, p 41, 43

them as supplementary evidence. If authentic, a (passage from a) letter can serve as evidence, because the content of that passage conforms with material from the discourses. This very state of affairs, however, can be taken as an argument against authenticity since many letters consist of rephrasings of material from the discourses, the possibility cannot be ruled out that the letters are products of progymnasmatial rhetorical exercises, in which Isocratean subject-matter was reproduced in letter form. In that case, however, they can still be useful as auxiliary material.<sup>42</sup>

In sum, the published discourses are the source material for the present study. As was noted above, these could be labelled "scholastic" in the sense that they are instructive, both as exemplary specimina of Isocratean discourse and as containing passages on rhetorical theory. Isocrates himself seems to have regarded the collection of discourses published after the establishment of his school as his relevant oeuvre. This can be deduced from the fact that he uses quotations from a number of them, starting from *Against the sophists*, in the late *apologia pro vita sua*, the *Antidosis*.

The object of this study is Isocrates' concepts of rhetorical composition. This term refers to the stages of both εὔρεσις and τάξις; their conceptual separation was not yet complete at the time. The distinction that did already exist was that between composition and stylistics, including diction and embellishment.<sup>43</sup> Thus Isocrates seems to be using the basic distinction between composition and style, which coincides with the classification used by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who distinguishes between πραγματικὸς τόπος and λεκτικὸς τόπος.<sup>44</sup>

In order to study these concepts §§ 14-18 of the programmatic discourse *Against the sophists* will be taken as a starting point at the beginning of each terminological chapter. In that passage Isocrates proposes in general terms the outlines of his rhetorical παιδεία. In this passage are three pivotal terms, by which his ideas can be arranged: ἰδέα, καιρός and καινός. The following study argues that they, in that

<sup>42</sup> The same argument applies, mutatis mutandis, to *Ad Demonium*. See Too (1995), 196-199, Eucken (1983), 6 & n. 9.

<sup>43</sup> See Hamberger (1914), 1 f., O'Sullivan (1992), 2 f.

<sup>44</sup> On Dionysius' distinction see Pritchett (1975), xxxvi, see also Martin (1974), 55, 217, in general see Kremer (1907).

order, constitute a sequence in the activities of the writer of discourse and represent the principles of Isocrates' concepts on composition.

- ἰδέα is used in the preliminary and conceptual stage of composition: this involves the selection of all the elements or parts from which to compose the discourse, both with regard to form and to content; this stage is concerned with the surface structure of the discourse;

- καίρως plays a crucial part in the arrangement of the parts of discourse, both with respect to their place and their relative length: a sense of proportion provides guidance; this phase concentrates on the articulation of the discourse and the purpose of its parts;

- καινός concerns the presentation of the subject-matter in a novel and fresh way, which implies selection of unused subject-matter, innovatory use of traditional material and improvement upon predecessors;

The Chapters II - IV will provide an analysis of Isocrates' concepts on composition following this sequential arrangement. In Chapter V the results of this analysis will be used to provide a rhetorical commentary on the *Helen*, which is intended to elucidate both its technical features and its exemplariness of Isocratean rhetoric in the broad sense.

## II. IDEA / EIDOS

The first technical term to be studied is *ιδέα*, to which *εἶδος* is very closely linked. Prior to determining the technical usage in Isocratean rhetorical theory, both words will be examined in general. In order to provide a context for the technical usage a short historical survey of the usage of both nouns will be provided.

### 1. *ιδέα* / *εἶδος* in general.

*Ἰδέα* and *εἶδος* are derived from the root *φιδ* and are therefore related to the verb-form *ιδεῖν*, which is an aorist to *ὁρᾶν* "to see". *Ἰδεῖν* has as its root meaning "to see with the eyes", and can thus refer to visual perception as such.<sup>1</sup> As nominal derivations from *ιδεῖν*, both *ιδέα* and *εἶδος* refer to "what is being seen", so that "appearance" may be taken as their common denotation.<sup>2</sup> Taking this as a starting point, one can distinguish between a number of derived usages.

The history of both words shows that *εἶδος* has the earliest attestations.<sup>3</sup> It occurs with some frequency in the *Iliad* and is used for "what is seen", esp. the shape of a human being. See, e.g., II, 57-58:

...μάλιστα δὲ Νέστορι δῖῳ  
εἶδος τε μέγεθος τε φύην τ' ἄγχιστα ἔφικεν.<sup>4</sup>

Here *εἶδος* refers to the human form as it presents itself to the perceiving eye. From later instances like Hdt. III, 107,2, one can conclude that in its usage *εἶδος* developed into a means of distinction by outer shape: in his description of the winged snakes, a species living in Arabia, Herodotus says that they are *σμικροὶ τὰ μεγέθεα, ποικίλοι τὰ εἶδεα*. This suggests that these snakes can be classified or distinguished by the way they look. This development continues, when *εἶδος* is found to refer to a thing perceived with special interest in one of its distinguishing features. An

<sup>1</sup> *Lex d'fruhgr.Epos*, Bd II, Göttingen 1991, Sp. 1116-1129, s.v. *ιδεῖν* [Vlachodimitris], Snell (1975), 15 & nn. 7,8

<sup>2</sup> See H. Frisk, *Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, Heidelberg 1960, Bd. I, 708 s.v. *ιδέα*, P. Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque Histoire des mots*, Paris 1968, 455, H.C. Baldry (1937), 141

<sup>3</sup> The following brief historical sketch is based on K. von Fritz, *Philosophie und sprachlicher Ausdruck bei Demokrit, Plato und Aristoteles*, Darmstadt 1966, 38-64, esp. 40-50

<sup>4</sup> It (*sc. ὄνειρος*) very closely resembled noble Nestor, in shape, height, and stature, more than any other



example of this is at Th III,82 there the political changes affecting the state are τοῖς εἶδεσι διηλλαγμένα or “different in kind”.

Thus εἶδος seems to have developed from referring to “shape” in the objective sense as “total form as it is perceived by the eyes” to “appearance” in the sense of “distinguishing feature” From this the development into “kind” in the abstract sense is a next step (see below)

In what seems to be the oldest occurrence, ιδέα is found in the *corpus Theognideum* There the word refers to “appearance” or “semblance”, and is to be understood as “what appears to be the case”. The subject of these verses (119-128) is the unreliability of one’s fellow-man’s disposition, his untrue heart The section concludes thus:

οὐδὲ γὰρ εἰδείης ἀνδρὸς νόον οὐδὲ γυναικός,  
 πρὶν πειρηθείης ὥσπερ ὑποζυγίου,  
 οὐδέ κεν εἰκάσσαις ὥσπερ ποτ’ ἐς ὥριον ἐλθῶν  
 πολλάκι γὰρ γνώμην ἐξαπατῶσ’ ιδέαι <sup>5</sup>

Clearly ιδέα as the subject of ἐξαπατῶσι is here meant to convey the deceptiveness of appearance things are not what they seem, and people hide their true feelings

‘Ιδέα, then, occurs in the sense of “shape” or “outward form” as it presents itself to the beholder Pindar’s Tenth Olympian provides an example

παῖδ’ ἐρατὸν (δ’) Ἀρχεστράτου  
 αἶνησα, τὸν εἶδον κρατέοντα χερὸς ἀλκῇ  
 βωμόν παρ’ Ὀλύμπιον  
 κείνον κατὰ χρόνον  
 ιδέα τε καλόν  
 ὥρᾳ τε κεκραμένον <sup>6</sup>

The poet looks (εἶδον) at the young Hagesidamos, and describes what he sees the beauty of his physical outward appearance

<sup>5</sup> Theogn 125-129 You cannot know a man’s or woman’s character until you’ve tried if it will bear a load, nor can you judge as if inspecting merchandise so often the appearances deceive [tr M L West, 1994], see T Hudson-Williams *The Elegies of Theognis* London 1910 (= New York 1979), 183, B A van Groningen, *Theognis Le premier livre* Amsterdam 1966, 53

<sup>6</sup> Pind O X, 99-104 I have praised the loved son of Archestratos whom I saw winning with valour of hand by the Olympian altar in those days, beautiful to the eye and endowed with youthfulness [tr C M Bowra, adapted]

Comparable is an instance in Herodotus, where he mentions that a horse cannot stand the sight and smell of a camel, and is frightened by it:

κάμηλον ἵππος φοβέεται, καὶ οὐκ ἀνέχεται οὔτε τὴν ἰδέην αὐτῆς ὀρῶν οὔτε τὴν ὀσμὴν ὁσφραϊνόμενος.<sup>7</sup>

That *idéa* predominantly refers to form may be concluded from another instance in Herodotus, where he compares the Boudinians and Gelonians, two tribes who live near Scythia. After mentioning their different ways of life, he says:

οὐδὲν τὴν ἰδέην ὅμοιοι οὐδὲ τὸ χρῶμα.<sup>8</sup>

When discussing Egyptian birds, Herodotus introduces the ibis, and proceeds to give a description of this bird's outward appearance:

εἶδος δὲ τῆς μὲν ἱβίος τόδε.<sup>9</sup>

In his description he mentions the bird's black colour, the shape of its legs and beak, and its size. He concludes his description of the black ibis as follows:

τῶν μὲν δὴ μελαινέων...ἦδε ἰδέη<sup>10</sup>

and then goes on to describe another kind of ibis, the ones that live near humans. From this it would seem that in referring to "appearance" Herodotus used both *idéa* and *eîdos*, without any specific difference. Both nouns can be seen to cover common ground in their reference to form. This means that they can be interchanged in referring to "appearance", but that is not to say that one is allowed to treat them as synonyms.<sup>11</sup> The general distinction between the two nouns seems to be that *idéa* is used where the denotation "outward appearance" dominates, and *eîdos* where "total form" is meant.

But one can point also to a more specific use of *idéa*, where it refers to a certain characteristic perceived by the senses. These characteristics are qualities an object can have, like colour, heat, coldness, liquidity, dryness, etc., and they can be determined by sight, touch, or taste.

<sup>7</sup> Hdt. I,80,4 *a horse is frightened by a camel, and it cannot stand its looks when it sees one nor its odour when it smells one*, cf. II,71,1 (description of the φύσις ἰδέης of hippopotamuses), II,92,4 (similarity in appearance of the fruit of the Egyptian bean to the wasp's honeycomb); see J E Powell, *A Lexicon to Herodotus*, Cambridge 1938, s.v. *idéa* 1

<sup>8</sup> Hdt. IV,109,1 *and they are completely unlike, both in form and colour (sc. of skin)*.

<sup>9</sup> Hdt. II,76,1 *The Ibis looks as follows*

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.* *well then, the black ones look like this*

<sup>11</sup> This leads to my disagreement with Wilamowitz: see n. 25, below.

Although this usage is often found elsewhere too<sup>12</sup>, its occurrences in the *corpus Hippocraticum* are of particular interest. There different properties of a certain substance or thing can be referred to with both *ιδέα* and *εἶδος*. In this way one can speak of, e.g., αἱ τρεῖς *ιδέαι* τῶν νοσημάτων τοῦ ὕδρωπος<sup>13</sup>, using *ιδέα* as “form” in order to classify the ways in which a certain disease can present itself.<sup>14</sup> It might be added that the physician Philistion used *ιδέα* to describe the four elements from which a human being is “constructed”:

Φιλιστίων δ' οἶται ἐκ δ' *ιδεῶν* συνεστάναι ἡμᾶς, τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἐκ στοιχείων· πυρός, ἀέρος, ὕδατος, γῆς.<sup>15</sup>

This use of *ιδέα* / *εἶδος* as “form” or “property” can be termed classificatory, and it extends to the process of division, resulting in the distinction of a number of kinds or types, belonging to a certain category. Thus Thucydides can say:

οἱ δὲ ἐν τῇ Αἰγύπτῳ Ἀθηναῖοι καὶ οἱ ξύμμαχοι ἐπέμενον καὶ αὐτοῖς πολλὰ *ιδέαι* πολέμων κατέστησαν.<sup>16</sup>

War may consist of victory or defeat: these are its intellectually perceivable “forms”, and, as can be seen from Thucydides’ description of what happened, these vicissitudes did indeed take place.<sup>17</sup> With this one may compare the question Pentheus asks the god Dionysus in the *Bacchae*:

τὰ δ' ὄργη· ἐστὶ τίς *ιδέαν* ἔχοντά σοι;<sup>18</sup>

<sup>12</sup> E.g. Hdt. IV,185,3 on the different colours of salt (*εἶδος* in acc. respectus); cf. VI,119,2 on a well that provides three different kinds of products (τοῦ φρέατος τὸ παρέχεται τριφασίας *ιδέας*: asphalt, salt, and oil).

<sup>13</sup> Hipp. *Morb.* IV,57: *the three forms of dropsy-diseases*; cf. IV,32

<sup>14</sup> See Gillespie (1912), 191 ff.; cf. Baldry (1937), 143.

<sup>15</sup> Anon Lond. 20, 25-27.

<sup>16</sup> Th. I,109,1: *The Athenians who were in Egypt and their allies stayed there, and they encountered many vicissitudes of war*; for *ιδέα* as “intellectually perceivable kind” see already Hdt. VI,100,1 on the Eretrians: τῶν δὲ Ἐρετρίων ἦν ἄρα οὐδὲν ὑγιὲς βούλευμα...ἐφρόνεον δὲ διφασίας *ιδέας* (their way of thinking went two ways); cf. also Pl. *Th.* 184 d 2: *ιδέα* as “kind of existence”.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. the scholion *ad loc.*: διάφοροι πόλεμοι, οἷον...νίκαί καὶ ἡτται; on this use of *ιδέα* in Thucydides see K.W. Kruger, *Thoukydidou Sungraphe*, Bd. 1, Berlin 1860, 121; S. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides*, vol. I: Books I-III, Oxford 1991, 173-175 points to the connection with the Hippocratic writings.

<sup>18</sup> Eur. *Bacch.* 471: *These rites of yours, of what kind are they?*; if, however, the ὄργια are physical objects, the translation of *ιδέα* should be “appearance”: see E.R. Dodds, *Euripides. Bacchae*, Oxford 1960, 137; cf. Ar. *Ra.* 382: ἄγε νῦν, ἐτέραν ὕμνων *ιδέαν* τὴν καρποφόρον βασιλῆαν! Δῆμητρα θεὸν ἐπικοσμοῦντες ζαθέας μολχαῖς κελαδεῖτε.

A summary of the general usage of ἰδέα / εἶδος is as follows: given the root-meaning “that which is seen” or “form”, it seems possible to distinguish four classes: (1) “appearance” in contrast with real nature; (2) “shape”; (3) “property” and (4) “kind” or “type”. The summary is predominantly based on texts prior to the fourth century BC, which is to say before Isocrates and Plato.

The use of ἰδέα / εἶδος found in Plato, insofar as he uses these words to refer to his Ideas or Forms, seems to present a further development.<sup>19</sup> His innovation was that he used both words to refer to an abstraction, something exclusively intelligible: the transcendent and eternal Ideas fundamental to his philosophy of knowledge. Because the sensible world is in constant flux, there cannot be a universal definition of a sensible thing: for that reason, Aristotle<sup>20</sup> says, Plato postulated “things of another sort, and these he called Ideas, and sensible things, he said, were apart from these, and were all called after these”. Thus Plato was able to use the existing words ἰδέα and εἶδος for his specific purposes, when constructing the language of his philosophy. The historical development of both nouns reached a stage which made this adaptation possible.<sup>21</sup> As an innovator of language, however, he was not unique: as will be shown below, his contemporary Isocrates also made use of the possibilities both nouns allowed to refer to abstractions.

## 2. ἰδέα / εἶδος in Isocrates: modern scholarship

It has long been recognized that both nouns ἰδέα and εἶδος represent an important element in Isocrates’ rhetorical theory, and a number of attempts have been made to clarify the meaning of these terms.

At first, they were taken as *termini technici* in the narrow sense. This means that their use was supposed to be restricted to the formal

<sup>19</sup> In general see E. Des Places SJ, *Lexique de la langue philosophique et religieuse de Platon*, (Platon. Oeuvres complètes T. XIV), Paris 1964, 159-61 (εἶδος); 260-1 (ἰδέα); see also W.D. Ross, *Plato's Theory of Ideas*, Oxford 1951, ch. 2; P. Brommer, *EIDOS et IDEA. Étude sémantique et chronologique des oeuvres de Platon*, diss. Utrecht (Assen 1940).

<sup>20</sup> Ar. *Metaph.* 987 b 5: τὰ μὲν τοιαῦτα τῶν ὄντων ἰδέας προσηγόρευσε, τὰ δὲ αἰσθητὰ παρὰ ταῦτα καὶ κατὰ ταῦτα λέγεσθαι πάντα (things of this other sort, then, he called Ideas, and sensible things, he said, were apart from these, and were all called after these, tr. W.D. Ross); see Baldry (1937), 144.

<sup>21</sup> Von Fritz (1966), 47 (which also offers a succinct description of the development of both nouns into their specific use for the Ideas or Forms within the Platonic corpus: 40-41, 48-49).

process of expression and composition, i.e. the stages of invention and composition as they came to be understood in later, traditional rhetorical theory. An early representative of this view is Taylor, who attributes "various technical senses" to both terms and proposes to interpret them as "gorgianic figure, style, manner".<sup>22</sup> Later H.M. Hubbell founded his interpretation on XIII,16 in combination with *Ep.* VI,8 (on which see p. 33 f.), and reached the conclusion that by ἰδέα Isocrates meant "thought elements; ideas...which the orator has ready as part of his stock in trade; commonplace arguments."<sup>23</sup> Contrary to Taylor, he defined the terms as more related to content or substance than to form.

In his study of Isocratean rhetorical terminology Wersdörfer<sup>24</sup> came to define ἰδέα in terms of both form and content. His definition, consequently, is rather broad and ranges from "die allgemeine Art und Weise rednerischer Stoffbehandlung nach Inhalt und Form zum Zweck der Überredung" to "allgemeine Gesichtspunkte, von denen die Stoffwahl geleitet wird", and he finally narrows down to "sogenannte Topoi, konkrete Gedankenkomplexe", as far as content is concerned. With regard to form as such, he defines ἰδέα as "die einzelne Stilmittel, sogenannte Stilfiguren." To this he adds the use of ἰδέα in an ethical sense, meaning "Tugend, Eigenschaft", as a separate category. In his approach Wersdörfer takes what he calls the "Grundbedeutung" of the term, being "Aussehen, äussere Gestalt, Erscheinung, Form", as his point of departure. Moreover, in his survey of ἰδέα he also looks at the instances of εἶδος, which he regards as synonym to ἰδέα.<sup>25</sup> He finally distinguishes seven different meanings, of which three are general in character and four are more specific (p. 53-54): (1) the general way and method of handling content in rhetoric; (2) kind, genre; (3) the general character of genre which determines its process of invention; (4) commonplace, topos; (5) figure of style; (6) quality, virtue; (7) situation, moment (only at III,44). He concludes that there is "ein weites ἰδέα-

<sup>22</sup> A.E. Taylor, *The Words Εἶδος ἰδέα in pre-Socratic Literature. Varia Socratica*, London 1911, 178-211.

<sup>23</sup> H.M. Hubbell, *The Influence of Isocrates on Cicero, Dionysius, and Aristeides*, New Haven 1913, 6-9.

<sup>24</sup> Wersdörfer (1940), 43-54.

<sup>25</sup> For this he quotes (p. 44, nn. 36 and 37) Wilamowitz (*Platon. II*, Berlin 1919, 249) to support his view: "Die Entwicklung des Wortgebrauchs (von εἶδος) ist...wert verfolgt zu werden. Hinzugenommen muss gleich ἰδέα werden, das jüngere Synonymon..."

Begriff", and that in each instance the context should provide a specific meaning on the basis of the root-meaning.

Even though Wersdörfer's analysis allows room for *ιδέα* as applied to content and not just form, it was Schlatter<sup>26</sup> who stressed that by this term Isocrates referred to the part of oratory outside the limited sphere of rhetorical technique. Schlatter defines this part as "the learnable material ... from which rhetoric builds its structures." In order to clarify his point, he uses the division between *λεκτικὸς τόπος* and *πραγματικὸς τόπος*, as developed in later rhetorical theory, and argues that *ιδέα* belongs predominantly to the latter category.

Schlatter's interpretation is further developed by Lidov<sup>27</sup>, who rightly points out that any interpretation that isolates form from content is unsatisfactory, because the limitation to form does injustice to Isocrates' concern for education and philosophy. To this it may be added that any attempt to draw a clear line between matters of form (*λέξις*) and content (*εὔρεσις*) is unsatisfactory, because such a disconnection is artificial. *Λέξις* refers to expression, the activity of "how-to-say-it-in-words", and necessarily combines matter and means, the "complementary features of speech".

Lidov does not reach a unified interpretation: according to him *ιδέα* represents "a somewhat vague concept...subject to variation in use". In addition, not all instances of the word can be subsumed under the meaning he proposes. This suggests that his interpretations are solely dependent on the context in each separate instance. Consequently, this invalidates the conclusions he reaches, the more so because he prefers to present each context "in a condensed translation" (p. 276).

Eucken<sup>28</sup>, in his study of the interrelationships between Isocrates and his contemporaries, also pays attention to the meaning of *ιδέα*. He concentrates on its occurrence in the eulogy of beauty in the *Helen* (X,54-60), and this suggests to him some kind of relationship with Plato: "Isokrates kommt in wörtlichen und gedanklichen Anklängen der platonischen Ideenlehre so nahe, daß der Hinweis auf sie evident ist. Zugleich wird aber auch die Distanz zu ihr offenkundig." (p. 105) On the basis of idiomatic similarity in comparison to Plato Eucken proposes an

<sup>26</sup> Schlatter (1972), 594 f.

<sup>27</sup> Lidov (1983), 275 f.

<sup>28</sup> Eucken (1983), 105-106.

Isocratean "Ideenlehre", prior to the Platonic one but different from it, and refers to XIII,16: there knowledge of the ἰδέαι λόγων (interpreted as "alle Formen sprachlicher Darstellung") is mentioned as a necessary precondition to success in rhetoric. Eucken concludes: "So war bereits unabhängig von Platon 'Idee' als allgemeine Form, unterschieden von ihrer konkreten Realisierung, verstanden worden. Ebenso war klar geworden, daß sie ihre Bedeutung erst in der durch 'Meinung' geleiteten Anwendung in der empirischen Realität hat. Hier liegt ein eigener Begriff von Idee als allgemeiner, jedoch weltimmanenter Form vor." (p. 106) Eucken does not elaborate, but refers to Wersdörfer for the specific usages. Thus he seems to allow for the possibility that ἰδέα refers to an abstraction (the "allgemeine Form" as opposed to its concrete realisation in discourse), and in doing so he puts Isocrates on a par with Plato, who is likewise credited with the innovation of philosophical idiom (see above). Still, Eucken's treatment of the word remains wanting: in his discussion of XIII, 16 f. (p. 30-31) he does not distinguish between ἰδέα and εἶδος, and his explanation of the passage must therefore be imprecise. In both cases his translation reads "(Rede)formen", but what exactly is meant by this remains unclear.

From this survey it is clear that of the programmatic key-words ἰδέα / εἶδος in Isocrates no unified interpretation has yet been given.<sup>29</sup> The usage of both words should be further clarified: to achieve this it is necessary to provide satisfactory interpretations of all occurrences of these words in Isocrates, on the basis of a clear root-meaning. The root-meaning can be taken as the general concept to which ἰδέα refers, while in the different instances one can see this concept applied in its specific denotations. All the instances, therefore, of ἰδέα / εἶδος in Isocrates will again be considered in this chapter, and, in order to provide a precise analysis, be studied in their wider context.

### 3. Ἰδέα as a technical term in rhetoric

The instances of both terms will be considered in the following order. First, the occurrences of ἰδέα in a technical context will be looked

<sup>29</sup> Kennedy (1994), 44-45 mentions Isocrates' "ideas" as constituent of his definition of rhetorical ability as "knowledge of ideas (ἰδέαι)", but he offers no further interpretation than "elements of rhetoric"



at, i.e. a programmatic context in which Isocrates explicitly deals with technical matters concerning the composition of discourse. Second, the instances of *ιδέα* in a general context will be considered (§ 4). And finally, the instances of *εἶδος* will be presented (§ 5).

The first example to be studied is XIII,16: this passage is taken from a discourse which belongs to the early period of Isocrates' activity as a teacher of rhetoric and publicist. It was, in fact, written at the very beginning of his career, as can be gathered from what Isocrates says at XV,193 before quoting from *Against the sophists*, the discourse in question: ὅτ' ἡρχόμεν περὶ ταύτην εἶναι τὴν πραγματείαν (= accepting pupils), λόγον διέδωκα γράψας ἐν ᾧ φανήσομαι τοῖς τε μείζους ποιουμένοις τὰς ὑποσχέσεις ἐπιτιμῶν καὶ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γνώμην ἀποφαινόμενος.<sup>30</sup>

The double intention of criticizing competitors who make false promises and of presenting one's own ideas, as made explicit here, is clearly reflected in the structure of the discourse itself. It has an *aba*-scheme: criticisms of fellow-rhetoricians and rival philosophers make up the chs. 1-13 and 19-22, while the presentation of his own views occupy chs. 14-18. The discourse can therefore be identified as an ἐπάγγελμα or programmatic discourse, in which Isocrates introduces his views on rhetoric.<sup>31</sup> In ch. 16 Isocrates proceeds to elucidate his ideas on how to compose a discourse:

[1] XIII, 16 φημὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ τῶν μὲν ἰδεῶν, ἐξ ὧν τοὺς λόγους ἅπαντας καὶ λέγομεν καὶ συντίθεμεν, λαβεῖν τὴν ἐπιστήμην οὐκ εἶναι τῶν πάνυ χαλεπῶν...<sup>32</sup>

In this passage Isocrates is making two points: first (μὲν), obtaining knowledge of the rhetorical *ιδέαι* as such is not that difficult; second (see p. 30 f.), what the proper use one has to make of them consists of. The second point will be discussed later, but now we concentrate on the first

<sup>30</sup> When I entered upon this activity, I wrote and published a discourse in which you will see that I attack those who make pretensions that are unwarranted and set forth my own ideas

<sup>31</sup> On the ἐπάγγελμα in general see Cole (1991), 86, Steidle (1952), 259, see also p. 78, 130 with n. 86

<sup>32</sup> I say that to obtain knowledge from the forms from which we put into words and construct discourses, is not very difficult

point Isocrates makes. It is said that discourses (λόγοι) are “put into words” (λέγειν) and “constructed” (συντιθέναι) with the help of ιδέαι.

One should not confine the the scope of the verb λέγειν to the category of style in the narrow sense of embellishment. As Aristotle observes, an alteration in expression of the same statement reflects the change of intention one has when uttering the statement. This he exemplifies with the case of praise and deliberation: ἃ γὰρ ἐν τῷ συμβουλευεῖν ὑπόθειο ἄν, ταῦτα μετατεθέντα τῇ λέξει ἐγκώμια γίνονται.<sup>33</sup> What he means by this can be gathered from the example he provides: the statement “οὐ δεῖ μέγα φρονεῖν ἐπὶ τοῖς διὰ τύχην ἀλλὰ τοῖς δι’ αὐτόν” (“one ought not to think highly of things gained by chance but of things gained through one’s efforts”) when thus phrased (οὕτω λεχθέν) is a proposition. But as an utterance of praise it runs “μέγα φρονῶν οὐ τοῖς διὰ τύχην ὑπάρχουσιν ἀλλὰ τοῖς δι’ αὐτόν” (“he did not think highly of what came by chance but of what he gained by his own efforts”).<sup>34</sup> It is clear that λέξις involves more than just finding the right phrase: it also involves a conscious decision on the structure and grammar of the statement as a whole.

The next verb to which λόγοι is object, is συντιθέναι “to put together constructively”. Isocrates uses this verb with some frequency to refer to the process of composing a discourse, e.g. in II,7, where he speaks of literary works as yet unfinished and still being ἐν ταῖς διανοοῖαις...τῶν συντιθέντων (in the minds of their composers). In the *Panathenaicus* there is a prolonged discussion between Isocrates and a pupil, who is invited to criticize the discourse as it has been presented to him. He refers to his master as (XII, 246) προελόμενον δέ σε συνθεῖναι λόγον (you who chose to compose a discourse) and discusses (XII, 249) τὴν διάνοιαν ἣν χρώμενος αὐτόν (= τὸν λόγον) συνέθηκας (the thought<sup>35</sup> which you used when writing the discourse, i.e. the intention you had in writing the discourse). The phrase (λόγον) συντιθέναι in the technical sense of “composing a discourse” occurs elsewhere as well and seems to

<sup>33</sup> Ar. Rh. 1367 b 36-37 *what one might propose in deliberation, becomes encomia when the form of expression is changed* [tr. Kennedy 1991]

<sup>34</sup> The statement seems to be taken from Isocrates IX,45 (praise) and XII,32 (proposition), and quoted from memory see Cope/Sandys (1877), 181-2, Grimaldi (1980), 216.

<sup>35</sup> On διάνοια in the sense of “intent”, as it is used in this hermeneutical passage on the ambivalence and “hidden intent” of the discourse as a whole, see Bons (1993), 160-171.

refer to the production of literary works in writing.<sup>36</sup> This clearly emerges from Th. I,97,2, where Thucydides justifies the insertion of a digression by saying: ἔγραψα δὲ αὐτὰ...διὰ τόδε, ὅτι τοῖς πρὸ ἐμοῦ ἄπασιν ἐκλιπὲς τοῦτο ἦν τὸ χωρίον καὶ ἡ τὰ πρὸ τῶν Μηδικῶν Ἑλληνικὰ ξυνετίθεσαν ἢ αὐτὰ τὰ Μηδικά.<sup>37</sup> Here Thucydides is referring to historiographers and their works he consulted, which means written sources.<sup>38</sup>

Συντιθέναι also suggests the metaphor of building.<sup>39</sup> The verb is used in the sense of “to put together constructively, in order to make a whole”, as in Herodotus’ description of the construction of the bridge over the Hellespont by means of joining ships: πεντηκοντέρους καὶ τριήρας συνθέντες.<sup>40</sup> In Thucydides the improvement of defense walls by soldiers is described thus: σιδήρια μὲν λιθουργὰ οὐκ ἔχοντες, λογάδην δὲ φέροντες λίθους, καὶ ξυνετίθεσαν ὡς ἕκαστόν τι ξυμβαίνει.<sup>41</sup> The image of building can then be applied to making a story, e.g. in Euripides’ *Bacchae* 297: συνθέντες λόγον.<sup>42</sup> Finally the activity of producing a written scholarly work can be described in terms of building, as is clear from a fragment of the sophist Hippias: ἐγὼ δὲ ἐκ πάντων τούτων τὰ μέγιστα καὶ ὁμόφυλα συνθείς τοῦτον...τὸν λόγον ποιήσομαι.<sup>43</sup>

According to Schlatter<sup>44</sup> the verbs λέγειν and συντιθέναι are complementary: they refer to the closely linked “double methodology” of expression and composition. From this it does not follow, however, that the *idéai* should not be confined to the purely technical sphere and that they refer to the material from which the discourses are made: the “general education” or the “*doctrina* on which rhetoric must draw in the exercise of its art” (p. 597). Schlatter’s interpretation rests on the supposition that Isocrates did not look upon rhetoric as a *τέχνη* but as an

<sup>36</sup> E.g. Th. I,21,1 λογογράφοι ξυνέθεσαν, Plato *Phdr.* 260 b 6 συντιθείς λόγον ἔπαινον, Ar. *Rh.* 1354 a 12 οἱ τὰς τέχνας τῶν λόγων συντιθέντες

<sup>37</sup> I wrote this for this reason, that all my predecessors left this field open and either wrote on Greek history before the Persian War or on the Persian War itself

<sup>38</sup> See Hornblower (1987), 83, 120, 128

<sup>39</sup> See Muller (1974), 34, cf. Plato *Soph.* 219 a 8 τὸ σύνθετον “the art of constructing” and τὸ πλάσσειν “the art of moulding vessels”, both subsumed under the τέχνη ποιητική

<sup>40</sup> Hdt. VII,36,1 joining together fifty-oars-ships and triremes, see How/Wells (1928), 142 for the details of the construction

<sup>41</sup> Th. IV,4,1 they had no iron tools to cut stone but selected stones and put them together as each one happened to fit, cf. IG 4-2 (1), 103,59, Xen. *Mem.* III,1,7

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Ar. *Ra.* 1052 λόγον ξυνέθηκα

<sup>43</sup> By putting together the most important and related of all this. I will write this discourse, see p. 127 & n. 74

<sup>44</sup> Schlatter (1972), 591 f

ἄσκησις (p. 593-4). Consequently one should distinguish between rhetorical technique and the elements from which the technique draws in producing a discourse, as, likewise, Cicero distinguished between *ars* and *materna artis*.<sup>45</sup>

It seems that Schlatter reads too much in this passage. Isocrates' remark that knowledge of the *ιδέαι* can be attained easily (the first point he makes in this passage), suggests that they do not belong to the general, more advanced concepts on rhetoric he has (see Ch. III, 80 f.). As became clear in XIII, 12-13, Isocrates distances himself from the purely technical approach of rhetoric and criticizes those who guarantee success in speaking by offering technical knowledge. He warns against this and claims that rhetoric is a creative rather than an automatic art. From this it is clear that for him general knowledge is superior to technical knowledge, but in XIII, 16, at least, it is not implied that the *ιδέαι* refer to this general, advanced knowledge alone. In this passage, however, the *ιδέαι* must also refer to elements of the propaedeutic rhetorical training, i.e. knowledge of technical precepts on composition and style.

The second point (δέ) Isocrates makes in XIII, 16 concerns another phase of rhetorical practice: the use of the *ιδέαι*:

[2] XIII, 16 τὸ δὲ τούτων (= τῶν *ιδεῶν*) ἐφ' ἐκάστῳ τῶν πραγμάτων ὅς δεῖ προέλθῃ καὶ μῖξαι πρὸς ἀλλήλαις καὶ τάξαι κατὰ τρόπον...ταῦτα δὲ πολλῆς ἐπιμελείας καὶ ψυχῆς ἀνδρικῆς καὶ δοξαστικῆς ἔργον εἶναι.<sup>46</sup>

What is difficult in rhetorical composition is not learning about its principal technicalities (see above), but the way these should be put to use. Making use (later referred to by *χρήσις*, see below) of the *ιδέαι* involves three different tasks, that seem to be presented in a logical

<sup>45</sup> Cic *Inv* 1,5,7, Schlatter connects this passage with *De Orat* 1,5,6 and 11-16, where it is stated that rhetoric presupposes a fund of knowledge which rhetoric itself does not supply. He reads an *Isocratia ratio oratoria* in these words and refers to *Fam* 1,9,23 where Cicero characterizes his recently written work *De oratore* *abhorrent enim a communibus praeceptis* (rules such as are found in the technical treatises) *atque omnem antiquorum et Aristoteliam et Isocratiam rationem oratoriam complectuntur*; see W W How - A C Clark, *Cicero Select Letters*, II, Oxford 1978, 233

<sup>46</sup> *but to choose from these the ones which should be employed for each subject, to combine them to each other, and arrange them properly, that <I say> requires much study and is the task of a mature and imaginative mind.*

sequence (1) to chose for each subject the required *ιδέαι*, (2) to make a combination of these, and (3) to arrange them in good order

On the basis of this programmatic passage one might tentatively conclude that with *ιδέαι* Isocrates refers to the elements of discourse either as the components of an existing text (material sense) or as the potential components of a text still to be produced (conceptual sense) These components will consist of all those elements from which a discourse can be constructed This will include the choice of words and style (“*compositio*”), and the speech parts (“*dispositio*”) Thus one can, in accordance with the root meaning of the word, propose to translate *ιδέα* as “format” and taking it to refer to all constituents that together make up the discourse as it presents itself to the reader

Further specification can be gained from the *Antidosis*, where Isocrates has included a number of citations from prior discourses In the introduction he points out that his discourse has a special character some parts would more properly fit the court-room, others are philosophical or educational discussions, and then there is material taken from discourses written by him in the past All this made for a long and complex discourse, on which he says

[3] XV, 11 τοσοῦτον οὖν μῆκος λόγου συνιδεῖν, καὶ τοσαύτας ἰδέας καὶ τοσοῦτον ἀλλήλων ἀφεστῶσας συναρμόσαι καὶ συναγαγεῖν, καὶ τὰς ἐπιφερομένας οἰκειῶσαι ταῖς προειρημέναις, καὶ πάσας ποιῆσαι σφίσιν αὐταῖς ὁμολογουμένας, οὐ πάνυ μικρὸν ἦν ἔργον <sup>47</sup>

From this passage somewhat more specified information emerges on the use of the *ιδέαι* in a discourse

- (1) the author should keep a comprehensive view (*συνιδεῖν*) of the discourse as a whole,
- (2) the author should harmonize and bring together the *ιδέαι* which constitute the discourse, this is further specified

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<sup>47</sup> Now to have a complete view of so long a discourse, and to harmonize and bring together its forms so many in number and so different the one from the other and to connect smoothly the following ones to the ones before and to make them all consonant with one another that was no small task.

(2a) the discourse contains a number of them (τοσαύτας): this probably refers to the plurality of the identifiable sections of different character already announced in general terms in chs. 9-10.

(2b) the sections are very different in character (τοσοῦτον...ἀφεστώσας);

(3) the author must establish smooth connections (οἰκειῶσαι) between the sections in their sequential order;

(4) the author must establish consistency (ὁμολογουμένης) between the sections.

These passages result in the identification of five specific categories of ways in which the *ιδέα* can be applied in discourse:

(1) selection

(2) whole and part

(3) plurality

(4) connection

(5) consistency

Each of these technical aspects can be further elucidated with the help of other passages.

#### (1) selection

The task of *προέλεσθαι* can be clarified by citing XV,142-3. There Isocrates praises Philip of Macedon, and in a *praeteritio* considers but then rejects the possibility of introducing a comparison between Philip and those who lived before his time, by which it would have been possible to show Philip's superiority:

[4] XV, 142-3 πῶς οὐκ ἂν πρὸς ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἀντιπαραβάλλων ῥαδίως ἂν ἐπέδειξα μείζω σε κάκεινων διαπεπραγμένον; ἀλλὰ γὰρ εἰλόμην ἀποσχέσθαι τῆς τοιαύτης ιδέας.<sup>48</sup>

What Isocrates considers is introducing the literary form of the comparison (σύγκρισις), a well known means of amplification. The comparison is a potential part of the discourse Isocrates presents, but he consciously decides not to include it here, although, of course, by considering this possibility the amplificatory effect is already present. What matters here is that the comparison is referred to by the term *ιδέα*,

<sup>48</sup> would it not have been easy for me to show, by comparing you to each of them, that you accomplished greater things than they? Yes, but I chose to abstain from a format such as this.

and that inclusion or exclusion of this form in the larger whole of the discourse is subject to a deliberate choice (εἰλόμην) on the part of the author.

Selection is explicitly treated in *Ep.* VI,8, where Isocrates<sup>49</sup> gives some impression of the procedures of his teaching:

[5] *Ep.* VI, 8 εἴθισμαι γὰρ λέγειν πρὸς τοὺς περὶ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν τὴν ἡμετέραν διατρίβοντας ὅτι τοῦτο πρῶτον δεῖ σκέψασθαι, τί τῷ λόγῳ καὶ τοῖς τοῦ λόγου μέρεσι διαπρακτέον ἐστίν· ἐπειδὴν δὲ τοῦθ' εὖρωμεν καὶ διακριβώσωμεθα, ζητητέον εἶναι φημι τὰς ιδέας δι' ὧν ταῦτ' ἐξεργασθήσεται καὶ λήψεται τέλος ὅπερ ὑπεθέμεθα<sup>50</sup>

In his instruction Isocrates distinguishes between two stages or procedures:

(a) a preparatory stage, during which one establishes what one wants to achieve with the discourse to be produced: its τέλος. This entails not only the discourse as a whole, but also its component parts;

(b) an inventive stage, during which a selection is made of those ιδέαι by which the purpose of the discourse can be achieved.<sup>51</sup>

The phrase τέλος ὅπερ ὑπεθέμεθα suggests that the discourse's purpose is equivalent to its υπόθεσις or "subject". An example of this is the *Busiris*, in which Isocrates wishes to present a eulogy for the tyrant Busiris. He wants to present a correct specimen of the genre "eulogy" and thus to instruct his rival Polycrates, who had produced an incorrect eulogy of the same tyrant. Isocrates announces in his prooemium that he will present a discourse περὶ τὴν αὐτὴν υπόθεσιν (9).<sup>52</sup>

The use, then, of ἐξεργασθήσεται "to bring to completion" is significant. The ιδέαι of the discourse are presented as instrumental

<sup>49</sup> On the authenticity of this letter see Blass II (1892), 110, 297-99, Steidle (1952), 265, Too (1995), 196-199, Mikkola (1954), 291 f. argues against its authenticity, further study of the problem of authenticity of the Isocratean letters is desired to date no detailed study is available that incorporates linguistic criteria like particle-usage, further, the fact that most letters are similar with regard to their content to some of the discourses, might raise doubts could it be that they in fact are progymnastic writings ("present Isocrates' concept X in letter-form")? See p. 13

<sup>50</sup> *It is my custom to say to those who study my philosophy, that they should first investigate what is to be accomplished by the discourse and by the parts of the discourse, when we have found that and have accurately determined it, then, I say, the forms must be sought by which this can be developed and the goal that we have set ourselves can be achieved.*

<sup>51</sup> Gaines (1990), 165 calls these the stages of "intellection" (a) and "invention" (b), see p. 44 on [13] and p. 59 below

<sup>52</sup> Cf. X,1 and commentary, p. 167 *ad locum*

(διὰ) to the achievement of the discourse's purpose. The metaphor implies that these ιδέαι are used as if they were building material: the verb ἐξεργάζεσθαι is used to refer to the activity of completing something by building, e.g. in Th. VI,101,1-2:...ἐτείχιζον οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι τὸν κρημνὸν τὸν ὑπερ τοῦ ἔλους...ἐπειδὴ τὸ πρὸς τὸν κρημνὸν ἐξείργαστο.<sup>53</sup>

The verb ζητεῖν implies an activity of looking for material, and the material to be found is explicitly qualified in teleological terms. This implies that one should choose what is conducive to the achievement of the goal set. This, in its turn, implies a deliberate choice and hence selection of the material.

This leaves the question about what the passage reveals about the ιδέαι. According to Gaines<sup>54</sup>, the passage can be connected with "what we know about Isocrates' theory of the parts of the speech", a theory to be distilled from Dionysius' *Lysias* 16. There an analysis is offered of the *Lysias*' capabilities with regard to what we know as the traditional parts of the speech (*partes orationis*): prooemium, diegesis etc. This analysis is based on the methods of division "as favoured by Isocrates and his school":

περί τε προοιμίων καὶ διηγήσεων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων μερῶν τοῦ λόγου καὶ διαλέξομαι καὶ δηλώσω, ποῖός τις ἐστὶν ἐν ἐκάστῃ τῶν ιδεῶν ὁ ἀνὴρ. διαιρησόμεναι δὲ αὐτὰς, ὥς Ἰσοκράτει τε καὶ τοῖς κατ' ἐκείνον τὸν ἄνδρα κοσμουμένοις ἤρεσεν, ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ τῶν προοιμίων.<sup>55</sup>

This passage in Dionysius, however, has little value as evidence for the Isocratean theory of speech parts. First, the phrase ὥς Ἰσοκράτει τε καὶ τοῖς κατ' ἐκείνον τὸν ἄνδρα κοσμουμένοις ἤρεσεν suggests that there is a particular way in which he and those following him equip speeches: the utterance at least implies the existence of a τέχνη by Isocrates. That there has ever been such a τέχνη is, however, highly improbable.<sup>56</sup> At most, it

<sup>53</sup> The Athenians started fortifying the edge over the swamp .after they had finished <the fortification> up to the edge, cf IV,4,3, for ἐξεργασία as tt for treatment (as part of the πραγματικὸς τόπος) in later rhetorical theory see D H. Isaeus 3, *Isocrates* 12 and esp 4, where Isocrates is praised for his superior arrangement and division of subject-matter (τάξις καὶ μερισμοὶ τῶν πραγμάτων), and its treatment by way of argumentation (ἐξεργασία κατ' ἐπιχείρημα), see Marun (1974), 217, 228

<sup>54</sup> Gaines (1990), 167 & nn 8-12

<sup>55</sup> D H *Lysias* 16 I shall go on to talk about the introduction, narrative and other parts of the speech, and to demonstrate the orator's (sc *Lysias*'s) characteristics in each part. I shall divide them up according to the arrangement favoured by Isocrates and his school, beginning with the introduction [tr Usher 1974]

<sup>56</sup> See for a recent discussion of the question and a convincing argument against the existence of such a *techné* by Cahn (1989), 121-144, see also Ch I, § 3



could be argued on the basis of this that there were rhetoricians who ascribed their methods of speech division to Isocrates. Second, since the speech Dionysius analyzes is by Lysias and furthermore belongs to the dicanic genre, it is only to be expected that the *ιδέαι* refer to the traditional parts of the dicanic speech. Isocrates, however, frequently insists on the epideictic character of his discourses, even if they adopt the outward form the deliberative genre (see Ch. I, § 2). One should not conclude, therefore, that Isocrates' "parts" were identical with prooemium, diegesis, etc.

The process of selection is also implied in XV,180 f., where Isocrates compares his education in philosophy with the physical education in gymnastics (*παιδοτριβική*). This analogy originates from the acknowledgement that human nature consists of two parts, the physical and the mental. The mental part is the more important, because of its hegemonical function. For these two components two educational arts were devised: physical training of gymnastics for the body and mental training or philosophy for the mind. Both these arts are, according to Isocrates, each other's corresponding counterparts. Since they belong to each other, they are consistent with one another (*διττὰς ἐπιμελείας.. ἀντιστρόφους*<sup>57</sup> καὶ σύζυγας καὶ σφίσιν αὐταῖς ὁμολογουμένης). He then proceeds to describe both methods of training, closely observing the analogy between the two:

[6] XV, 183-4 ἐπειδὴν γὰρ λάβωσι μαθητάς, οἱ μὲν παιδοτρίβει τὰ σχήματα τὰ πρὸς ἀγωνίαν εὐρημένα τοὺς φοιτῶντας διδάσκουσιν, οἱ δὲ περὶ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ὄντες τὰς ιδέας ἀπάσας, αἷς ὁ λόγος τυγχάνει χρώμενος, διεξέρχονται τοῖς μαθηταῖς. ἐμπείρους δὲ τούτων ποιήσαντες καὶ διακριβώσαντες ἐν τούτοις πάλιν γυμνάζουσιν αὐτούς, καὶ πονεῖν ἐθίζουσιν, καὶ συνείρειν καθ' ἓν ἕκαστον ὧν ἔμαθον ἀναγκάζουσιν, ἵνα ταῦτα βεβαιότερον κατὰσχῳσι καὶ τῶν καιρῶν ἐγγυτέρω ταῖς δόξαις γένωνται.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>57</sup> On ἀντίστροφος as characterizing an analogy cf. Plato *Gorg.* 462 b - 466 a (the analogies of real arts and flattery), Arist. *Rh.* I,1 (rhetoric / dialectic), see Grimaldi (1980), *ad loc.*, L. D. Green, "Aristotelian Rhetoric, Dialectic, and the Traditions of ἀντίστροφος", *Rhetorica* 8 (1990), 5-28

<sup>58</sup> When they accept pupils, the physical trainers instruct their followers in the postures devised for the contest, while the teachers of philosophy go through all the forms which discourse uses with their pupils. And when they have made them familiar with these and have gone into them in detail, then they put them to exercises, and make them used to hard work, and force them to string together, one after the other, the lessons they learnt, in order that they get a firmer grasp of them and with the theories approach the occasions <of application>

The significant analogy is between the *ιδέαι* of philosophy (rhetoric) and the *σχήματα* of physical training, as part of a comprehensive didactic procedure. As the following remarks by Isocrates (184-185) make clear, this procedure of training entails not only what one might call theoretical knowledge (*διδάσκουσι* and *διεξέρχονται* imply instruction by the transfer of knowledge), but also elements of practice or exercise and, as a prerequisite to successful teaching, the presence of natural ability in the student. Thus one finds in these chapters a comprehensive view on didactics, organized on the principle of the so-called *trias paedagogica*: φύσις, ἐπιστήμη, μελέτη.<sup>59</sup> It should be noted that Isocrates explicitly limits the scope of ἐπιστήμη to the elementary level. In 184 he writes:

τῷ μὲν γὰρ εἰδέναι περιλαβεῖν αὐτοὺς (sc. τοὺς καιροὺς) οὐχ οἷόν τ' ἐστίν· ἐπὶ γὰρ ἀπάντων τῶν πραγμάτων διαφεύγουσι τὰς ἐπιστήμας, οἱ δὲ μάλιστα προσέχοντες τὸν νοῦν καὶ δυνάμενοι θεωρεῖν τὸ συμβαῖνον ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ πλειστάκις αὐτῶν τυγχάνουσι.<sup>60</sup>

The preference of δόξα "opinion" over ἐπιστήμη "knowledge" is fundamental to Isocrates' view on didactics and, therefore, on rhetoric in general. According to him, attainment of exact knowledge is impossible for humankind, and the highest level achievable is that of opinion. With this, however, Isocrates does not mean subjective opinion: in his view it is opinion based on experience and observation, which enables the intelligent man to judge and gain insight in situations as they arise. On the basis of what regularly happens in similar circumstances the intelligent and educated man can take the right decisions by drawing on his experience. Thus, in the process of acquiring expertise, opinion is the necessary complement to knowledge.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Cf. II, 35 (on learning the requirements for good kingship) ὅ τι ἂν ἀκριβῶσαι βουλευθῆς ὧν ἐκίστασθαι προσήκει τοὺς βασιλεῖς, ἐμπειρίᾳ μέτεθι καὶ φιλοσοφίᾳ· τὸ μὲν γὰρ φιλοσοφεῖν τὰς ὁδοὺς σοὶ δείξει, τὸ δ' ἐκ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἔργων γυμνάζεσθαι δύνασθαι σε χρῆσθαι τοῖς πράγμασι ποιήσῃ (whenver you wish to determine precisely the things which it is fitting for kings to know, pursue these both by practice and theory to theorize will show you the ways, and training in the actual doing of things will make you capable of dealing with affairs; see Steidle (1952), 257 f., Burk (1923), 94 f., Shorey (1909), 185-201

<sup>60</sup> For with knowledge they cannot be grasped, because in all cases they elude exact science; but those who most apply their intelligence and are capable of observing the consequence as it happens for the most part, can most often hit on them

<sup>61</sup> Cf. XIII, 1-3, XV, 271, see Wersdorfer (1940), 45-46, Mikkola (1954), 22 f.; 97-103; see also Gillis (1969), 321-348, esp. 327-332 (to be used with care), Rummel (1979), 26-28 (where "situational" is to be preferred to "relativistic" as a characterization of Isocratean ethics: see below, p. 49, 178-179), cf. also Gorgias *Hel* 11, *Pal.* 24.

In the first stage of the didactic procedures, the aim of physical training is to teach "postures": positions or stances, which a participant in a bodily contest needs to know and master in order to perform well and be successful. These can be interpreted as the techniques belonging to a particular kind of contest, such as wrestling. They are analogous to the techniques used in discourse. Learning these elementary techniques does not mean that all of them will always be used when occasion arises: this is made clear by a passage in Quintilian, who seems to draw on this Isocratean analogy when he compares rhetorical instruction to the teaching by trainers of wrestling. The trainers do not teach their pupils the various throws in order that they use all of them in a wrestling match, the outcome of which depends on other factors as well. They equip them, however, with a store from which to choose in a particular situation.<sup>62</sup> Similarly, it is up to the speaker, as to his analogon the wrestler, to select from his store of potentialities, when he finds himself in a situation where he must draw on the technique he has learned.

The word *σχῆμα* itself is used by Isocrates in a rhetorical-technical sense in the opening of the *Antidosis*, where he gives his reasons for having chosen the form of an apology for his discourse. An encomium would not have served his purposes, because he would not be able to address all the points he selected for treatment, and he would have incurred the envy of his audience (8):

εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐπαινεῖν ἑμαυτὸν ἐπιχειροῖν, ἑώρων οὕτε περιλαβεῖν ἅπαντα περὶ ὧν διελθεῖν προηρῶμην οἷός τε γενησόμενος, οὐτ' ἐπιχαρίτως οὐδ' ἀνεπιφθόνως εἰπεῖν περὶ αὐτῶν δυνησόμενος.<sup>63</sup>

The arguments against the use of an encomium are concerned with generic convention: the genre of the encomium has its own rules and therefore excludes some of the subject-matter selected by Isocrates;

<sup>62</sup> Quint *IO* XII,2,12 et ut palaestrici doctores illos, quos numeros vocant, non idcirco discenibus tradunt, ut is omnibus ii, qui didicerint, in ipso luctandi certamine utantur (plus enim pondere et firmitate et spiritu agitur), sed ut subsit copia illa, ex qua unum aut alterum, cuius se occasio dederit, efficiant, see R G Austin, *Quintiliani Institutiones Oratoriae Liber XII*, Oxford 1948 (= 1954), 80 *ad loc.* on the "athletic" simile in general he does not, however, refer to Isocrates, cf Quint *IO* XII,10,41, X,1,4 verum nos non quo modo sit instituendus orator hoc loco dicimus sed athleta, qui omnes iam perdidicerit a praeceptore numeros, quo genere exercitationis ad certamina praeparandus sit. Igitur eum qui res invenire et disponere sciet, verba quoque et eligendi et collocandi rationem perceperit, instruiamus qua ratione quod didicerit facere quam optime, quam facillime possit, see W Peterson, *Quintiliani Institutionis Oratoriae Liber X*, Oxford 1958 (= 1903), *ad loc.*

<sup>63</sup> I saw that if I were to try to praise myself, I would not be able to include all the points I chose for treatment, nor would it be possible for me to speak on them with favourable reception or without incurring envy

secondly, a discourse of praise on oneself is likely to provoke negative reactions on the part of the audience<sup>64</sup> The form of the apology also enables him to answer all the calumnies brought against him and is therefore most suited:

εἰ δὲ ὑποθείμην ἀγῶνα ... ἑμαυτὸν δ' ἐν ἀπολογίας σχήματι τοὺς λόγους ποιοῦμενον, οὕτως ἂν ἐκγενέσθαι μοι μάλιστα διαλεχθῆναι περὶ πάντων ὧν τυγχάνω βουλόμενος.<sup>65</sup>

The apology and its conventions enable the speaker to present himself and his case in a certain way. By adopting this literary format, Isocrates will be able to address all the topics he has selected: he adopts the stance<sup>66</sup> of the defendant before a court of law and refutes all the incriminations brought forward by the imaginary adversary (a fictional character manipulated, of course, by himself).

## (2) part and whole

Again in the *Antidosis* Isocrates discusses briefly poetry and prose, and says that there are no fewer “ways of prose” (τρόποι τῶν λόγων) than there are of poetry. He enumerates some of these kinds of prose-writing: genealogy (οἱ τὰ γενῇ τὰ τῶν ἡμιθέων ἀναζητοῦντες), interpretation of poetry (οἱ περὶ τοὺς ποιητὰς ἐφιλοσόφησαν), military history (οἱ τὰς πράξεις τὰς ἐν πολέμοις συναγαγεῖν ἐβουλήθησαν), and dialogue (οἱ περὶ τὰς ἐρωτήσεις καὶ τὰς ἀποκρίσεις γεγόνασιν).<sup>67</sup> Then he writes:

[7] XV, 46 εἴη δ' ἂν οὐ μικρὸν ἔργον, εἰ πάσας τὰς ἰδέας τὰς τῶν λόγων ἐξαριθμεῖν ἐπιχειρήσειεν.<sup>68</sup>

Here ἰδέα is used parallel to τρόπος and refers to the different forms or kinds of prose-writing. As the reference here is to discourses as

<sup>64</sup> On the conventions of encomiastic writing see the *Busiris*, a lesson-by-example containing theory as well, see Bons (1996), the envy is a topos cf Gorgias *Pal* 28 περὶ ἐμοῦ βούλομαι εἰπεῖν ἐπίφθορον μὲν ἀληθὲς δὲ

<sup>65</sup> but if I would use the fiction of a trial having myself speak in the manner of an apology, thus it would best be possible for me to discuss all the points I want

<sup>66</sup> For σχῆμα as “stance” cf Plut *QC* 747 B it is one of the means of expression, next to φορεῖν “steps” and δειξεῖς “gestures”, in acting (comparable to dancing), cf Plato *Leg* VII, 795 E, 816 A, Xen *Symp* II, 15, 19, Arist *Poet* 1447 a 26-28, Lucianus *De saltu* 19, cf LSI s.v. σχηματίζω I, 1

<sup>67</sup> See p 42 with n 78

<sup>68</sup> It would be no small task for one to enumerate all forms of prose

specimens of a certain distinct literary category, it is the specific aspect of the whole of a work which is relevant here. The way it presents itself in form and content is the criterion for classification. The matter of distinguishing *genera* in prose is taken up again by Isocrates in XII, 1: see p. 13, 35.

With this one may compare a passage from the *Busiris*. This encomium was composed by Isocrates as reaction to a similar discourse published by the rhetorician Polycrates of Samos, who had also written an "Accusation of Socrates". He, however, allegedly made some fundamental mistakes against the rules of encomiastic writing in his *Defense of Busiris*, and Isocrates wishes to correct him by producing an exemplary encomium of his own (4: πειράσομαί σοι ποιῆσαι καταφανές ὅτι πολὺ τοῦ δέοντος ἐν ἀμφοτέροις τοῖς λόγοις διήμαρτες<sup>69</sup>). After showing how Polycrates has gone astray (5-8), Isocrates explicitly states his intention. He wishes to make clear what the prescriptions<sup>70</sup> are for the writing of eulogy and apology (πειράσομαι... δηλώσαι... ἐξ ὧν ἔδει καὶ τὸν ἔπαινον καὶ τὴν ἀπολογίαν ποιήσασθαι) by treating the same subject again (τὴν αὐτὴν ὑπόθεσιν). One of the generic conventions discussed by Isocrates is the question about allowing fictionality. In ch. 33 he introduces the problem of truth and falsehood, and stipulates that false arguments can be allowed, provided that they are credible, which in turn depends on their being possible or probable. He says:

[8] XI, 33 ἔπειτ' εἰ καὶ τυγχάνομεν ἀμφοτέροι ψευδῇ λέγοντες, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγὼ μὲν κέχρημαι τούτοις τοῖς λόγοις οἷσπερ χρὴ τοὺς ἐπαινοῦντας, σὺ δ' οἷς προσήκει λοιδοροῦντας ὥστ' οὐ μόνον τῆς ἀληθείας αὐτῶν ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ιδέας ὅλης δι' ἧς εὐλογεῖν δεῖ φαίνει διημαρτηκῶς<sup>71</sup>

The mistake Polycrates made against the conventions of the encomium is twofold. first, he used untrue arguments lacking credibility; second, he used the kind of arguments that belong to another genre and therefore failed to observe the rules that govern the format of eulogy

<sup>69</sup> I will try to make it clear to you that you in both discourses have fallen far short of what is required.

<sup>70</sup> See p. 49 with n. 100

<sup>71</sup> Further, even if both of us have spoken untruth, I at least have used those arguments one should use when writing praise but you used those as fit those who revile, consequently, you not only made a mistake regarding their truthfulness, but also regarding the whole form which one must employ in eulogy

Ἰδέα τῆς εὐλογίας can be interpreted as the complete set of rules out of which eulogy is composed. The result of the appropriate use of conventional arguments is, in this case, a discourse that presents itself as, or has the form of, a eulogy.<sup>72</sup>

In the opening of the *Panegyricus* Isocrates discusses the principle of ὑπερβολή, the necessity for a literary author to improve on the work of predecessors.<sup>73</sup> A precondition for the realisation of this aim is, besides the presence of the suitable situation in general and the treatment of the subject at hand being incomplete, the possibility of literary variation:

[9] IV, 7 εἰ μὲν μηδαμῶς ἄλλως οἶόντ' ἦν δηλοῦν τὰς αὐτὰς πράξεις ἀλλ' ἢ διὰ μιᾶς ιδέας, εἶχεν ἂν τις ὑπολαβεῖν ὥς περιέργον ἔστι τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον ἐκείνοις λέγοντα πάλιν ἐνοχλεῖν τοῖς ἀκούουσιν· ἐπειδὴ δὲ οἱ λόγοι τοιαύτην ἔχουσι τὴν φύσιν, ὥστ' οἶόντ' εἶναι περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν πολλαχῶς ἐξηγήσασθαι.<sup>74</sup>

Discourses are capable of variation in presentation and expression, and therefore it is possible to treat (δηλοῦν)<sup>75</sup> the same subject in different ways. Ἰδέα refers to the form which is the final result of that treatment: the discourse as it presents itself to its recipient.

The point of generic appropriateness is also made in the *Helen*. In the introduction of this discourse Isocrates criticizes his forerunner (maybe Gorgias of Leontini, but see the commentary *ad loc.*), who mistakenly produced an *apology* of Helen while maintaining to have written an *encomium*. At this point Isocrates writes:

[10] X, 15 ἔστι δ' οὐκ ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν ιδεῶν οὐδὲ περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν ἔργων ὁ λόγος, ἀλλὰ πᾶν τοῦναντίον· ἀπολογεῖσθαι μὲν γὰρ προσήκει περὶ τῶν ἀδικεῖν αἰτίας ἐχόντων, ἐπαινεῖν δὲ τοὺς ἐπ' ἀγαθῇ τινὶ διαφέροντας.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Ar. Av. 993 τί δ' αὖ σὺ δράσων; τίς δ' ιδέα βουλευματος; (what will you do now? What do you plan? / what does your plan look like? ), on the implication of completeness in ὅλης see p. 54 with n. 117 and p. 62.

<sup>73</sup> See Ch IV, 128-133.

<sup>74</sup> if it were in no other way possible to present the same subject-matter except in one form, one might suppose it to be superfluous to trouble the audience once more by speaking in the same way as those <before him>, but since discourses are of such nature that they can go on at length in many different ways on the same subject.

<sup>75</sup> See p. 45-46.

<sup>76</sup> This discourse does not consist of the same forms nor is it about the same actions, but quite the contrary: a plea in defense is appropriate for those who are charged with doing wrong, and praise for those who excel in some good quality.

It seems, then, that a discourse belonging to a certain genre consists of (ἐστὶ ἐκ) certain *idéai* that are appropriate to each separate genre and not to the other. This means that a discourse is envisaged as being built from (a number of) parts. Secondly, this passage indicates implicitly that the author must be conscious of the rule of generic convention and must act accordingly when, as in this case, composing an apology or eulogy. This again means that the aspect of selection of *idéai* is present here as well. At the same time the generic distinction implies a difference of content these *idéai* have: in the case of apology the material and argument the author uses must be different from eulogy, and vice versa. Thus *idéa* refers to both form, in the sense that a certain part or section is meant, and content, insofar as it refers to what is said in these parts or sections. In short, *idéa* can refer to both formal and material qualities of the discourse.

With this one might compare Isocrates' characterisation of his own works as opposed to other kinds of prose, as he presents this contrast in the opening sections of the *Panathenaiscus*. There he dissociates himself from a number of other works (λόγοι):

(a) works with mythical subjects (μυθῶδεις)

(b) works full of marvels and fictions (τοὺς τερατείαις καὶ ψευδολογίας μεστός)

-two categories<sup>77</sup> appreciated by the majority of the audience-

(c) works on history and wars of the Hellenes (τοὺς τὰς παλαιὰς πράξεις καὶ τοὺς πολέμους τοὺς Ἑλληνικοὺς ἐξηγουμένους)

(d) works which give the impression of being expressed in a simple way and lacking any subtlety (τοὺς ἀπλῶς δοκοῦντας εἰρήσθαι καὶ μηδεμίαν κομψότητα μετέχοντας).

The first three categories can be generally identified as mythical (see below), fictional, and historiographical works. The last can be identified by what Isocrates adds: that kind of works is advocated by "those who are clever at trials" (οἱ δεινοὶ περὶ τοὺς ἀγῶνας), which means the

<sup>77</sup> Ψευδολογία or writing which lacks ἀλήθεια (the property of "truth" belongs to his φιλοσοφία XII,260) is a category to which can belong many different kinds of writing cf. X,1, where Platonic views are connected with the works of the ἐριστικοί and philosophers who speculate on nature their works are characterized in c 4 as ψευδῆ λόγον; see Steidle (1952), 261-262, commentary, p. 167 *ad loc*; Fuchs (1993), 1-12.

practitioners of forensic rhetoric.<sup>78</sup> He then says of his own writing that they are on different subjects and that they furthermore

[11] XII, 2 καὶ πολλῶν μὲν ἐνθυμημάτων γέμοντας, οὐκ ὀλίγων δ' ἀντιθέσεων καὶ παρισώσεων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ιδεῶν τῶν ἐν ταῖς ῥητορείαις διαλαμπουσῶν καὶ τοὺς ἀκούοντας ἐπισημαίνεισθαι καὶ θορυβεῖν ἀναγκαζουσῶν<sup>79</sup>

It seems that the ιδεᾶι are to be understood as other examples of that category of means of expression to which antitheses and parisoses belong, i.e. the verbal figures. With that interpretation the ιδεᾶι can be identified with what came to be called the "gorgianic figures". But another way of interpretation seems to be possible as well. After first mentioning content as a distinctive mark of his works, Isocrates adduces another criterium: the means of expression used in his discourses. Of these he explicitly mentions ἐνθυμήματα or "arguments", stylistic features "and the other forms that will give brilliance in practical discourse and will meet with approval and applause". Seen in this way Isocrates uses a classification of means of expression which can be labelled with the help of technical terminology from later rhetorical theory: the first class is concerned with thoughts and might be identified with the *figurae sententiae*, the second class with expression in the narrow sense and is thus to be identified with the *figurae verborum*.<sup>80</sup> Both classes are ways of expression and, when applied, cause the discourse to have its final form. Both classes are subsumed<sup>81</sup> under the term ιδεᾶ.

That ιδεᾶ also has to do with content and subject-matter (its material aspect) emerges from a passage in the protreptic discourse *To Nicocles*, where Isocrates discusses the preferences the public has with regard to the content of literary works (48). A writer seeking to please his audience (γράφειν τι κεχαρισμένον τοῖς πολλοῖς) should, Isocrates

<sup>78</sup> By using the characteristics ἀπλῶς εἰρῆσθαι and μηδεμιᾶς κοινότητος μετέχειν Isocrates clearly hints at the divide between oral and written discourse, see O'Sullivan (1992), 42-62, on these characteristics see also Bons (1992), 17-22, for Isocratean divisions of prose in general see Pfister (1933), 457-460, Wilcox (1943), 427-431.

<sup>79</sup> they are full of thoughts, and of not a few balanced phrases and sounds, and of the other forms that will give brilliance to public speaking and will make the audience applaud and cheer.

<sup>80</sup> For σχῆμα as "figure of speech" see *Rh. ad Alex.* 1438 b 6, 1444 b 34, 1449 b 14, *Dem. De eloc.* 263-271, see Schenkeveld (1964), 132-134.

<sup>81</sup> I take ἅλλος to cover both classes, see LSJ s v II-8, see also Lidov (1983), 280.



ironically says, abstain from writing works that are profitable (ὠφελιμοτάτους τῶν λόγων). He will, rather, acknowledge that the multitude appreciates works containing mythical fiction (μυθωδεστάτους)<sup>82</sup>. The multitude like listening to this, just as they like looking at competitions and contests: ἀκούοντες μὲν γὰρ τῶν τοιούτων (= works of fiction) χαίρουσι, θεωροῦντες δὲ τοὺς ἀγῶνας καὶ τὰς ἀμίλλας. Therefore Homer and the inventors of tragedy deserve admiration, because they understood this aspect of human nature and

[12] II, 48 ἀμφοτέραις ταῖς ιδέαις ταύταις κατεχρήσαντο πρὸς τὴν ποίησιν.<sup>83</sup>

By ιδέαι Isocrates refers to the two sources of pleasure for the multitude, fiction and agonistics (combative situations), which Homer and the early tragedians used in their works. The verb κατεχρήσαντο is used in the technical sense of “using raw material for a work of literature”. Homer did this by putting the contests and wars of the demigods into mythical fiction (ὁ μὲν γὰρ τοὺς ἀγῶνας καὶ τοὺς πολέμους τοὺς τῶν ἡμιθέων ἐμυθολόγησεν), the tragic poets by making myths into contests and actions (οἱ δὲ τοὺς μύθους εἰς ἀγῶνας καὶ πράξεις κατέστησαν).<sup>84</sup> If, then, the aim of an author is to have an attentive audience, which is expressed by the verb ψυχαγωγεῖν, he should abstain from admonishment and advice (νουθετεῖν καὶ συμβουλεύειν) - the aim of Isocrates' own writing -, and say the kind of things he sees his audience appreciate: τὰ δὲ τοιαῦτα λεκτέον οἷς ὁρῶσι τοὺς ὄχλους χαίροντας. Both these elements, mythical fiction and agonistic activities, are potential subject-matter for a writer: thus ιδέα is here used in a material sense, as it refers to these forms of material to be used in a literary work.

<sup>82</sup> For μυθώδης in Isocrates cf. IX,10; XII,1,237; esp. IV,28 where the myth of Demeter bringing civilisation to Attica (an early example of “Kulturentstehungslehre”) is introduced as a μυθώδης ὁ λόγος; this might indicate that by μυθώδης Isocrates means “mythical”, in the sense that the material of the story is drawn from myth.

<sup>83</sup> They used both these forms for the production (of their works).

<sup>84</sup> See on χρήσις; one might compare Arist. *Poet.* 14, 1453 b 22 on the use the poet can make of traditional story material in tragedy: τοὺς μὲν οὖν παρειλημμένους μύθους λύειν οὐκ ἔστιν (he mentions two examples), αὐτὸν δὲ εὐρίσκειν δεῖ καὶ τοῖς παραδεδομένοις χρησθαι καλῶς (“the poet) cannot interfere with the traditional stories, but should invent for himself and make good use of the traditional material”, I take καὶ as explanatory. the “good use” consists of ingenious variation, not shaping whole new plots, see Lucas (1968), 152 *ad loc.*

## (3) plurality

In the prooemium of the *Helen* Isocrates stresses that he will present a work of praise that has serious intention, which should not be compared to the gratuitous works of other writers of encomia. Of his own work he says:

[13] X, 11 οἱ δὲ κοινοὶ καὶ πιστοὶ καὶ τουτοῖς ὅμοιοι τῶν λόγων διὰ πολλῶν ἰδεῶν καὶ καιρῶν δυσκαταμαθήτων εὐρίσκονται τε καὶ λέγονται<sup>85</sup>

Serious discourse deserves that qualification not just on the basis of its subject-matter, but also because of certain formal characteristics. Here Isocrates stipulates that serious discourse comes into existence by a procedure of invention and expression, which entails the presence of a multitude of ἰδέαι. Serious discourse is, therefore, not simple, in the sense that the plurality of forms implies complexity. On the καιροί as “measures” of discourse, see further below, Ch. III.

When defending his activity as a teacher of rhetoric in the *Antidosis*, Isocrates points out that one should differentiate between himself and the writers of speeches concerning private contracts (λόγους...περὶ τῶν ἰδίων συμβολαίων). He, on the other hand, is concerned with writing discourses that he characterizes as “Hellenic, political and panegyric” (Ἑλληνικοὺς καὶ πολιτικοὺς καὶ πανηγυρικοὺς), meaning that they deal with matters relevant to all Hellenes, are of interest to the body politic, and are appropriate to be heard at communal festivals. This kind of discourse can be classified more easily together with works that are set to music and are rhythmical than with forensic speeches (οὓς ἅπαντες ἂν φήσαιεν ὁμοιοτέρους εἶναι τοῖς μετὰ μουσικῆς καὶ ῥυθμῶν πεποιημένοις ἢ τοῖς ἐν δικαστηρίῳ λεγομένοις<sup>86</sup>). The difference pointed at here is that between works that are “made” (πεποιημένοις) and works that are “spoken” (λεγομένοις), in other words: between written and oral discourses. This difference he explains further:

<sup>85</sup> But the discourses of common interest, the ones that are trustworthy and similar to these, are devised and put to words through a multitude of forms and measures that are hard to learn

<sup>86</sup> (discourses) that all would agree are more like the works made with music and rhythm than the ones spoken in a court of law

[14] XV, 47 καὶ γὰρ τῇ λέξει ποιητικωτέρα καὶ ποικιλωτέρα τὰς πράξεις δηλοῦσι, καὶ τοῖς ἐνθυμήμασιν ὀγκωδεστέροις καὶ καινότεροις χρησθαι ζητοῦσιν, ἔτι δὲ ταῖς ἄλλαις ἰδέαις ἐπιφανεστέραις καὶ πλείοσιν ὅλον τὸν λόγον διοικοῦσιν <sup>87</sup>

On the basis of this passage a number of observations can be made. The statement is clearly divided in three parts (καὶ γὰρ δηλοῦσι / καὶ ζητοῦσιν / ἔτι δὲ διοικοῦσιν), which indicates that Isocrates has three differences between written and oral discourse in mind. These seem to be (a) the manner of expression, (b) the way of using arguments, (c) the way of using ἰδέαι. In all these respects Isocrates' works are more like poetry than delivered discourse. Each of these will be discussed separately.

With respect to (a) one may compare IX,9-10, where Isocrates explains why it is more difficult for writers of prose to compose an encomium than it is for poets. This is due to the fact that poets have more means of verbal equipment at their disposal (τοῖς ποιηταῖς πολλοὶ δέδονται κόσμοι), of which he specifies the following:

καὶ γὰρ πλησιάζοντας τοὺς θεοὺς τοῖς ἀνθρώποις οἷόν τ' αὐτοῖς ποιῆσαι καὶ διαλεγόμενους καὶ συναγωνιζομένους οἷς ἂν βουληθῶσι, καὶ περὶ τούτων δηλῶσαι μὴ μόνον τοῖς τεταγμένοις ὀνόμασιν, ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν ξένοις, τὰ δὲ καινοῖς, τὰ δὲ μεταφοραῖς, καὶ μηδὲν παραλιπεῖν, ἀλλὰ πᾶσι τοῖς εἵδεσι διαποικίλαι τὴν ποίησιν

- they can represent the gods as associating with men, and have them speak to or help in battle whomsoever they please,
- they can treat these subjects not only in ordinary, conventional language, but also in exotic words, neologisms, metaphor,
- they don't have to leave anything out, but can variegate the work they make with all kinds (of ornament)

Isocrates distinguishes here between representation and phrasing, the first being an aspect of content, the second of form. Finally, he says that poets have license in both these aspects: both are κόσμοι to be used for variation (διαποικίλαι) <sup>88</sup>

<sup>87</sup> For they treat the subject matter with an expression more poetical and variegated, and seek to use thoughts more impressive and fresh, and further they also give order to the speech as a whole with forms that more conspicuous and greater in number

<sup>88</sup> See Zucker (1927) 247-8

The feature of phrasing can serve as a specification of (a) in [10]: in the way they set forth (δηλοῦσι) their subject-matter, Isocrates' works are akin to the works of the poets, who enjoy license in their choice of words. Freedom in this respect is one of the means of ornament which serve to variegate. In this sense he can characterize his works as ποιητικός and ποικίλος.

For (b) again the comparison in IX,10 between prose and poetry is relevant. Whereas poets have a great freedom of choice, the writer of prose does not:

τοῖς δὲ περὶ τοὺς λόγους οὐδὲν ἔξεστι τῶν τοιούτων, ἀλλ' ἀποτόμως καὶ τῶν ὀνομάτων τοῖς πολιτικοῖς μόνον καὶ τῶν ἐνθυμημάτων τοῖς περὶ αὐτὰς τὰς πράξεις ἀναγκαῖόν ἐστι χρῆσθαι.<sup>89</sup>

The same two aspects, albeit in chiasmic order, are identified for the writer of prose: with regard to expression (form) he must restrict himself to current usage, and with regard to "thoughts" (content) to relevance to the subject. An ἐνθύμημα is connected to subject-matter and can be used (χρῆσθαι) in the treatment of subject-matter. The same distinction is made somewhat further on in the same passage: there Isocrates says that the influence of rhythm and metre in poetical works is so strong that poets can retain their hearer's attention with these very features, even if they are deficient in style (λέξις) and thought (ἐνθυμήματα): (such is the charm of metre and rhythm) ὥστ' ἂν καὶ τῇ λέξει καὶ τοῖς ἐνθυμήμασιν ἔχῃ κακῶς, ὅμως αὐταῖς ταῖς εὐρυθμίαις καὶ ταῖς συμμετρίαις ψυχαγωγῶσι τοὺς ἀκούοντας.

In XIII,16 Isocrates says that one task of the composer of discourses is to variegate the whole speech with thoughts: τοῖς ἐνθυμήμασι πρεπόντως ὅλον τὸν λόγον καταποικίλει. The verb καταποικίλει makes it clear that he is thinking of the means of equipment (κόσμοι) in poetical discourse, in which both form and content are included. The use of πρεπόντως suggests that the presence of the ἐνθυμήματα should be clearly perceptible, which means that they should not only occupy a fitting position but also that they should be conspicuous in their presence.<sup>90</sup>

Taken by itself, ἐνθύμημα as "thought" is prior to the activity of expression: it is already present and is potential raw material to be used

<sup>89</sup> For prose-writers none of such things is possible, but they absolutely must only use current words in expression, and things relevant to the subject itself in argumentation.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Anst. Rh. III,7, on πρέπον (and its difference from προσήκον) see ch. III, 95 & n. 102.

(χρήσις) in the composition of the discourse. This involves selection, in order to use the thoughts relevant to the subject-matter at hand, as emerges from IV,9, where that subject-matter is past events or history:

αἱ μὲν γὰρ πράξεις αἱ προγεγενημέναι...τὸ δὲ ἐν καιρῷ ταυταῖς καταχρήσασθαι καὶ τὰ προσήκοντα περὶ ἐκάστης ἐνθυμηθῆναι καὶ τοῖς ὀνόμασιν εὖ διαθέσθαι τῶν εὖ φρονούντων ἴδιόν ἐστιν.<sup>91</sup>

Here the use of the past as subject-matter is presented in three aspects: first, it should be used with a sense of measure (on which see Ch. III); then, on each separate event one should develop relevant thoughts; and finally, one should give attention to good expression. The second aspect is one of invention: when it is decided that a certain historical event should be included in the discourse, then one must develop thoughts on that subject that are fitting and that belong to it (προσήκοντα).

In II,11 there is a more specified use of ἐνθυμέομαι in this technical sense. In his advice to the young king Nicocles Isocrates stresses the need for the monarch of developing his intellectual capacities, and he uses an *a fortiori* argument: as the athlete trains his body, so the king will even more train his mind, because the prize for the king is superior. Isocrates goes on to remark: ὦν ἐνθυμούμενον χρὴ προσέχειν τὸν νοῦν.<sup>92</sup> The “thought” here referred to is the argument just mentioned. This passage, for which there are many parallels<sup>93</sup>, confirms the interpretation of ἐνθύμημα in a technical sense as “argument”.

In XII,2 Isocrates says that one thing that makes his discourses different is that they “are filled with many thoughts” (πολλῶν ἐνθυμημάτων γέμοντας). With this phrase may be compared what he says in V,109 on the potential topics for praising Heracles: many have singled out his valour and labours in their hymns, but nobody has dealt with his excellences of spirit (τῶν τῇ ψυχῇ προσόντων ἀγαθῶν οὐδεὶς...φανήσεται μνεῖαν κεποιημένος). He continues:

ἐγὼ δ' ὁρῶ μὲν τόπον ἴδιον καὶ παντάπασιν ἀδιεξέργαστον, οὐ μικρὸν οὐδὲ κενόν, ἀλλὰ πολλῶν μὲν ἐπαίνων καὶ καλῶν πράξεων γέμοντα, ποθοῦντα δὲ τὸν ἀξίως ἂν δυνηθέντα διαλεχθῆναι περὶ αὐτῶν.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>91</sup> the events of the past to use them with due measure, and to conceive relevant thoughts on each of them, and to set them forth effectively in words, is the peculiar gift of the intelligent.

<sup>92</sup> Bearing that thought in mind, you should be attentive

<sup>93</sup> Cf. IV,122, V,78,118, VI,52, VII,3, VIII,6,121, XIV,51; XV,122,173, Ep II,9

<sup>94</sup> I, however, see a field of its own and entirely lacking treatment, not small or empty, but full of many subjects for praise and honourable actions, that yearns for one who is able to produce a treatment worthy of the subject

On the general subject of Heracles' spiritual qualities Isocrates sees many possibilities for original<sup>95</sup> treatment and development (see above on ἐργάζεσθαι): that particular field is "filled" with many subjects for praise and beautiful actions, all of which can be used in discourse. Thus these subjects can be considered specific examples of what Isocrates calls ἐνθυμήματα or thoughts: they are arguments to be used in the treatment of a subject.

The attributes ὀγκώδης and καινός used in [10] (b) to qualify ἐνθύμημα are compatible with this interpretation. When used with "thought" the verb ὀγκόω is used in a technical sense as "to confer dignity", e.g. in Longinus, where the question is raised to what extent Plato was able to confer dignity in the opening of his Epitaphios (= *Menexenus* 236 d): ἄρα δὴ τούτοις μετρίως ὀγκώσσε τὴν νόησιν.<sup>96</sup> The need for the composer of discourse to present "new" arguments will be dealt with separately further below, Ch. IV.

For the use of ἰδέαι, aspect (c) under [10], the verb διοικεῖν "to manage a household" suggests the idea of management or ordering. The verb is used in connection with the content of a discourse and its arrangement in other instances as well. In the prooemium of his *Panathenaicus* Isocrates announces what will be the content of his speech: he will speak on his own life and ways, and will try to give insight into the work to which he is devoted. By doing so Isocrates expects to live free from annoyance, but this will happen only if he succeeds in putting forth a well-ordered discourse (XII, 6):

ἦν γὰρ ταῦτα τῷ λόγῳ δυνηθῶ διοικῆσαι κατὰ τρόπον.<sup>97</sup>

Ταῦτα is the object to διοικῆσαι and refers to the just announced subject-matter of the discourse. The focus here is more than just on management, but rather on good management. The phrase κατὰ τρόπον suggests correctness, a state of being in accordance with the rule.<sup>98</sup> In this sense the same expression is used by Isocrates on correct behaviour.

<sup>95</sup> On ἴδιον as the term for "originality" see commentary, p. 172 on X,13.

<sup>96</sup> Long. *Subl.* 28,1: *is it in a slight degree only that he has magnified the concept by the use of these words?*; cf. Arist. *Rh.* III,6; See O'Sullivan (1992), 12 & n. 53 on ὄγκος in literary criticism.

<sup>97</sup> *If I am able to manage this in my discourse in due order.*

<sup>98</sup> Cf. the older expressions κατὰ κόσμον and κατὰ μοῖραν, in a context of literary theory to be interpreted as "properly", referring to the fact that the speaker/singer knows his job: see Verdenius (1983), 53 & n. 183

A king's life consists of courses of action, and about these it is the task of those near him to give advice (II,6):

καθ' ἐκάστην μὲν οὖν τὴν πράξιν, ἐξ ὧν ἂν τις μάλιστα δύναται κατὰ τρόπον διοικεῖν καὶ τὰ μὲν ἀγαθὰ διαφυλάττειν τὰς δὲ συμφορὰς διαφεύγειν, τῶν αἰ παρόντων ἔργον ἐστὶ συμβουλεύειν.<sup>99</sup>

The king will manage by his policies, and good management should result in what is required: a situation characterised by the presence of good and the absence of evil. One can thus interpret κατὰ τρόπον in the sense of "according to the rule" or "correctly".

The interpretation of κατὰ τρόπον as "according to the rule" implies that the phrase can be related to the prescriptive technical terminology of τὸ δέον and its cognates.<sup>100</sup> Furthermore, the phrase also suggests that the work which is in accordance with this requirement can be characterized as being consistent (on which see below).

Finally, there are the attributes πλείοσιν and ἐπιφανέστεραις. With the former plurality is again suggested. A discourse as envisaged by Isocrates should have more than one ἰδέα, and each of these should stand out and be clearly distinguishable. Ἐπιφανής suggests that these ἰδέαι are not only clearly visible because they are marked, but also because they are remarkable.<sup>101</sup> In that sense one can draw a parallel between ἐπιφανής and πρεπόντως, both attributed to ἰδέα in a similar context (see above, p. 95).

The clear perceptibility of ἰδέαι also emerges from XII,2, where Isocrates contrasts his own works to other kinds of rhetoric. He stresses that his works are meant as advice to Athens and the whole of Hellas (περὶ ἐκείνους ἐπραγματεύομην, τοὺς περὶ τῶν συμφερόντων τῇ τε πόλει καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις Ἑλλήσι συμβουλεύοντας), and adds that they καὶ πολλῶν μὲν ἐνθυμημάτων γέμοντας, οὐκ ὀλίγων δ' ἀντιθέσεων καὶ παρισώσεων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἰδεῶν τῶν ἐν ταῖς ῥητορείαις διαλαμπουσῶν καὶ τοὺς ἀκούοντας ἐπισημαίνεσθαι καὶ θορυβεῖν ἀναγκάζουσιν.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>99</sup> Well, with regard to each course of action, it is the task of those always around him to give advice on the means of how to manage them properly, and how to preserve what is good and avoid misfortune

<sup>100</sup> Cf e.g. XIII,16 ὡς δεῖ, cf Gorgias *Hel.* 2 λέξαι τὸ δέον ὁρθῶς, see Wersdorfer (1940), 20, 60, Steidle (1952), 264 & n 6, see also Ch IV, 124 & n 63

<sup>101</sup> Cf IV,68 ἐπιφανέστατος μὲν οὖν τῶν πολέμων ὁ Περσικὸς γέγονεν (the most famous of our wars was the one against the Persians), VII,62 τῶν ἄλλων πόλεων ταῖς ἐπιφανέσταταις καὶ μεγίσταις (the most renowned and greatest of our cities)

<sup>102</sup> they are full of thoughts, and of not a few balanced phrases and sounds, and of the other forms that will give brilliance to public speaking and will make the audience applaud and cheer

The verb διαλάμπειν suggests that the ιδέαι “shine”, and thus are conspicuously present in the composition. Interestingly it is stated what effect their presence will have on the audience: they will make them applaud<sup>103</sup> and cheer<sup>104</sup>. Here one is given insight in the rhetorical practice.<sup>105</sup> A speech will be read aloud to an audience, which will react to what it hears, and indicate its approval. Such a situation can be envisaged from XII, 233, where Isocrates describes how he invited a number of pupils to come and listen to a speech of his:

εὐθύς παρεκέκληντο μὲν οὖς εἶπον, προειρηκῶς δ' ἦν αὐτοῖς ἐφ' ᾧ συνεληλυθότες ἦσαν, ἀνέγνωστο δ' ὁ λόγος, ἐπηννημένος δ' ἦν καὶ τεθορυβημένος καὶ τετυχηκῶς ὥνπερ οἱ κατορθοῦντες ἐν ταῖς ἐπιδείξεσιν.<sup>106</sup>

The situation is described in a clear sequence: a successful discourse is read aloud to an audience, that will indicate its appreciation by expressing praise and by applause.

#### (4) connection

#### (5) consistency

The connection of ιδέαι (οἰκειῶσαι) and their consistency (ὁμολογουμένης ποιῆσαι) can be most conveniently taken together and subsumed under the head of Isocrates' synthetic view of the discourse. He stresses the fundamental unity of discourse, and argues for the necessary integration of all parts to a synthetic whole. In this respect one can point to a clear difference in approach to the sophists and their treatment of discourse by a division into parts. In Plato's *Phaedrus* 266 d 6 f. Socrates and Phaedrus discuss the achievements of the sophists in rhetoric, and they point out the highlights of rhetorical theory as it emerges from the technical handbooks (τὰ ἐν τοῖς βιβλίοις τοῖς περὶ

<sup>103</sup> Cf. Aesch. II, 49 ἀνίσταται Δημοσθένης ὁρῶν ἐπισημαινόμενον τὸν δῆμον καὶ ἀποδεξιζόμενον τοὺς παρ' ἐμοῦ λόγους (*Demosthenes got on his feet seeing that the people applauded and accepted what was said by me*), Menander *Phasma* fr 2 (Koerte) ἐπισημαίνεσθ' ἑάν τις σκευασία καθάριος ἢ καὶ ποικίλη

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Arist. *Rh.* 1356 b 23 πιθανοὶ μὲν οὖν οὐχ ἦντο οἱ λόγοι διὰ τῶν παραδειγμάτων,θορυβοῦνται δὲ μᾶλλον οἱ ἐνθυμηματικοί (*speeches using paradigms are not less persuasive, but those with enthymemes excite more favourable audience reaction*, tr. Kennedy 1991)

<sup>105</sup> On ῥητορεία as “rhetorical practice” see Grimaldi (1980), 51

<sup>106</sup> immediately they whom I have mentioned were summoned, I had announced beforehand to them for what reason they were assembled, the discourse was read aloud, I received praise and applause and was accorded with the appreciation successful discourses get in displays



λόγων τέχνης γεγραμμένους)<sup>107</sup>. Socrates distinguishes between the following groups:

(a) 266 d 7 - 267 b 5/ 267 d 2-6: the precepts on (the parts of) discourse (prooemium, narration, evidence by witnesses, indirect evidence, probabilities, proof, refutation for prosecution and defense), which can be attributed to Theodorus of Byzantium; covert allusion and indirect compliment, attributed to Evenus of Paros; argument from probability, amplification and diminution, variation of content and length, attributed to Tisias and Gorgias; relative proportion of parts, attributed to Prodicus and Hippias; recapitulation;

(b) 267 b 10 - d 2: the precepts on language and style by Polus, Protagoras and Thrasymachus of Chalcedon.

The sophists named under category (a) are concerned with matters of composition, both on the level of overall structure and of argumentation: their concepts are relevant to the parts of the judicial speech (introduction, narrative, argumentation, conclusion).<sup>108</sup> Thus these sophists display an analytical approach rather than a synthetic one.

The synthetic approach by Isocrates can be illustrated by what he says in the *Antidosis* on the generic differences within his own oeuvre. He states (XV, 67) that one should distinguish between his paraenetic works and other discourses. Before quoting from the speech *To Nicocles*, a work described by him as an advice on his part to the young king on how to manage his rule (συμβουλευών ὡς δεῖ τῶν πολιτῶν ἄρχειν), Isocrates comments on the nature of the discourse's structure. This advisory discourse, he says, is written in a way different from the discourses he has presented extracts from so far:

[15] XV, 67 οὐχ ὁμοίως δὲ γέγραπται τοῖς ἀνεγνωσμένοις. οὗτοι μὲν γὰρ τὸ λεγόμενον ὁμολογούμενον αἰεὶ τῷ προειρημένῳ καὶ συνεκκελειμένῳ ἔχουσιν, ἐν δὲ τούτῳ τὸνναντίον· ἀπολύσας γὰρ ἀπὸ τοῦ προτέρου καὶ χωρὶς, ὥσπερ τὰ καλούμενα κεφάλαια, ποιήσας, πειρῶμαι διὰ βραχέων ἕκαστον ὧν συμβουλευῶ φράζειν.<sup>109</sup>

<sup>107</sup> On the doctrines of the sophists on discourse in general see Rutherford (1995), 102-111; on the complications caused by Plato's misrepresentations of their views see Wilcox (1943), 113-115, 131-133; Classen (1975), 348, id (1976), 11

<sup>108</sup> See Kennedy (1963), 56 f., Cole (1991), 18-19, 82-85, 130-133; see also Ch. IV, 112 f.; see also Hamberger (1914), 6-80, Laplace (1995), 1-15.

<sup>109</sup> It is not written in the same way as the ones already read. In them what is said is always in accord with what is said before, and in necessary connection; but in this one it is the opposite:

The paraenesis has a very loose structure, and resembles a string of pieces of advice, each of which can be, as it were, taken out of the discourse and still be a piece of valid advice, even if isolated from the others and standing independently. As such the paraenetic discourses are comparable to wisdom-literature and gnomic advice in general, of which the *corpus Theognideum* is a good example.<sup>110</sup> They follow no linear course (ἀπολύσας - χωρίς) and derive their disjunctured structure from the enumeration of main points (κεφάλαια) of advice.

By reversing what is said about paraenesis, one gets a clearer view about what is meant by the requirement of connection and consistency in serious discourse, which is different from paraenesis. Such discourse (a) should have agreeing (ὁμολογούμενον) parts, in the sense that latter parts fit to the former; (b) should be linear (συγκεκλειμένον), in the sense that each part is necessarily linked or connected with the one before. Thus connection and consistency are integral parts of a synthetic concept of discourse.

The demand of linearity or linear development is demonstrated in the prooemium of the *Panathenaicus*, where Isocrates decides not to begin with the praise of Athens before concluding his polemics with his rivals:

[16] XII, 24 εἰ γὰρ τοῦτ' ἤδη ποιοίην μῆτε τέλος ἐπιθεῖς τοῖς γεγραμμένοις μῆτε συγκλείσας τὴν ἀρχὴν τῶν ῥηθήσεσθαι μελλόντων τῇ τελευτῇ τῶν ἤδη προειρημένων, ὅμοιος ἂν εἶναι δόξαιμι τοῖς εἰκῇ καὶ φορτικῶς καὶ χύδην ὅ τι ἂν ἐπέλθῃ λέγουσιν· ἃ φυλακτέον ἡμῖν ἐστί·<sup>111</sup>

Thus one part must be rounded off and completed before the speaker proceeds to his next topic, and thus there is a connection between beginning and end.

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*disconnecting one part from the before-going and isolating it, as it were in what is called headings, I try to formulate in a few words each of the items of my advice*

<sup>110</sup> Cf. II.43, where Hesiod, Theognis and Phocylides are mentioned as sources; see Too (1995), 59-60

<sup>111</sup> *If I were to do this now, without putting an end to what I have written and without connecting the beginning of what is going to be said to the end of what has been said just now, I would resemble those who speak randomly, coarsely, and by indiscriminately saying what occurs to them - this is what should be avoided by us*

Similarly, a preference for synthetic structure of discourse is pronounced by Socrates in Plato's *Phaedrus*, during his critical discussion of the pseudo-Lysianic ἐρωτικός λόγος presented at the opening of the dialogue. After Phaedrus has read the speech said to be composed by Lysias aloud, Socrates subjects it to formal criticism, and says that Lysias himself would have considered it inadequate (τῷ γὰρ ῥητορικῷ αὐτοῦ μόνῳ τὸν νοῦν προσεῖχον, τοῦτο δὲ οὐδ' (ἂν) αὐτὸν ὥμην Λυσίαν οἶεσθαι ἱκανὸν εἶναι). At 234 e 5 - 235 b 5 Socrates provides his reasons for this judgment: the speech is repetitive, its author seems incapable of going on at some length on the same subject, and leaves the impression not to care about the subject; he gives an impression of youthful extravagance by showing off his ability to say the same thing twice differently.<sup>112</sup> Later on, at 264 b 4 - e 3, Socrates adds to these criticisms the specific objection concerning the speech's structure. He says:

οὐ χύδην δοκεῖ βεβλήσθαι τὰ τοῦ λόγου; ἢ φαίνεται τὸ δεύτερον εἰρημένον ἕκτινος ἀνάγκης δεύτερον δεῖν τεθῆναι, ἢ τι ἄλλο τῶν ῥηθέντων; ἐμοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἔδοξεν, ὥς μηδὲν εἰδῶτι, οὐκ ἀγεννῶς τὸ ἐπὶ εἰρῆσθαι τῷ γράφοντι· σὺ δ' ἔχεις τινὰ ἀνάγκην λογογραφικὴν ἢ ταῦτα ἐκείνος οὕτως ἐφεξῆς παρ' ἄλληλα ἔθηκεν;<sup>113</sup>

The criticism about lack of cogency in composition resembles in its phraseology what Isocrates says in XII,24 (see above, [16]) about the need of connection and consistency, especially in the way in which the absence of such cogency is described: compositions like that are characterized as being written χύδην "haphazardly" and by a procedure in which the writer just puts down what comes into his head (τὸ ἐπὶ εἰρῆσθαι Plato / ὅ τι ἂν ἐπέλθῃ λέγουσιν Isocrates). A discourse should, instead, according to Socrates, answer to a cogent principle of composition (ἀνάγκη λογογραφικὴ), which he describes by using the image of the living body (264 c 2-5):

<sup>112</sup> See Ch. IV, 122 f

<sup>113</sup> *doesn't his matter strike you as thrown out at haphazard? Do you find any cogent reason for his next remark, or indeed any of his remarks, occupying the place it does? I myself, in my ignorance, thought that the writer, with a fine abandon, put down just what came into his head. Can you find any cogent principle of composition which he observed in setting down his observations in this particular order?* [tr Hackforth]

...δεῖν πάντα λόγον ὥσπερ ζῶον συνεστάναι σῶμά τι ἔχοντα αὐτὸν αὐτοῦ, ὥστε μήτε ἀκέφαλον εἶναι μήτε ἄπουν, ἀλλὰ μέσα τε ἔχειν καὶ ἄκρα, πρέποντα ἀλλήλοις καὶ τῷ ὅλῳ γεγραμμένα.<sup>114</sup>

Socrates here introduces the concept of organic composition, which he illustrates with an epigram on Midas<sup>115</sup>: it has four lines, but the order of these lines can be changed indiscriminately and the epigram still makes sense. The Lysianic speech is just like this epigram and, by implication, appears not to conform to the requirement of organic composition. Just as the body is made up out of functional parts, so all parts of a composition must have their proper function and place in order for the discourse to be a whole.<sup>116</sup>

Socrates further elaborates his concept by discussing the technical precepts of rhetoric as taught by the sophists (266 b 2 f.), of which he says that they are, in fact, the preliminaries to a real art (τὰ πρὸ τῆς τέχνης, 269 b 7-8), but that the art itself consists of τὰ δὲ ἕκαστα τούτων πιθανῶς λέγειν τε καὶ τὸ ὅλον συνίστασθαι “employing them (sc. the technical rules) persuasively in speaking and organizing the work into a whole”.

Because the image of the body is missing, one cannot state that Isocrates advocates a requirement of organic unity as present in Plato, but the concept of connection and consistency, or coherency, at least allows for the conclusion that his ideas on composition in discourse compare to those of Plato. The synthetic approach as it emerges from (4) and (5) accounts for the emphasis laid by Isocrates on the procedures of χρήσις: to know the ιδέα belongs to a preliminary stage, but real mastership of rhetoric only reveals itself in the way the “forms” are used in order to produce a discourse that can be regarded as a coherent whole.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>114</sup> any discourse ought to be constructed like a living creature, with its own body, as it were; it must not lack either head or feet, it must have a middle and extremities so composed as to suit each other and the whole work [tr. Hackforth]

<sup>115</sup> See De Vries (1969), 212 for a discussion of the epigram as such

<sup>116</sup> On organic composition see Sicking (1963), 225-242, Hellwig (1973), 322 f., Ferran (1987), 52-53, 74-81, Heath (1989), 12 f

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Arist. *Poet.* 1450 b 21-34 on unity or wholeness, the first characteristic of which is order (τὸ ὅλον), which is defined as τὸ ἔχον ἀρχὴν καὶ μέσον καὶ τελευτήν. After providing definitions of these parts any plot should have, A. concludes δεῖ ἄρα τοὺς συνεστῶτας εὖ μύθους μὴθ' ὁπόθεν ἔτυχεν ἀρχεσθαι μὴθ' ὅπου ἔτυχε τελευτᾶν, ἀλλὰ κεκρῆσθαι ταῖς εἰρημέναις ιδέαις “Well-ordered plots, then, must not begin or end just anywhere, but use the afore mentioned parts” This prescription seems to be influenced also by Isocratean synthetic theory of ιδέα and their χρήσις, and not only by the Platonic concept of organic composition as proposed in the *Phaedrus* (see Lucas (1968), 111 *ad loc.*)

The usage of διοικεῖν in [13] also provides some further clarification on οἰκείωσαι, which appears in XV,11 (= [3]) and which can be translated with "to make fit". In [3] the idea of making a fitting connection between what came before and what follows is predominant. The image of connection is used in this sense in XV,107, where it is reported that the area surrounding some cities, captured by the general Timotheus, was forced to come to terms with Athens: ἅπας ὁ τόπος ὁ περιέχων οἰκείως ἠναγκάσθη τῇ πόλει γενέσθαι.<sup>118</sup> Furthermore, the image of a well ordered whole as a result of connection emerges from IV,41, in a description of the general characteristics of Athen's constitution:

τὴν τοίνυν ἄλλην διοίκησιν οὕτω φιλοξένως κατεσκευάσατο καὶ πρὸς ἅπαντας οἰκείως, ὥστε καὶ τοῖς χρημάτων δεομένοις καὶ τοῖς ἀπολαύσαι τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ἐπιθυμοῦσιν ἀμφοτέροις ἀρμόττειν.<sup>119</sup>

The management (διοίκησις) of the state is such that it results in harmony and a well-ordered whole (ἀρμόττειν), made up of both the poor and the rich. Management on the level of the state is parallel to the management on the level of discourse: also a discourse will become a harmonious whole<sup>120</sup>, provided its author manages its parts well.

#### 4. ἰδέα in non-technical contexts

Beside the sphere of rhetorical theory and prescription, ἰδέα also occurs in more general contexts. First, in the *Panathenaicus* Isocrates discusses the different possible kinds of polity. He writes:

[17] XII, 132 ἐγὼ δὲ φημὶ τὰς μὲν ἰδέας τῶν πολιτειῶν τρεῖς εἶναι μόνας, ὀλιγαρχίαν, δημοκρατίαν, μοναρχίαν.<sup>121</sup>

Here ἰδέα concurs with general usage: it refers to the different forms a polity can have, and is thus the word with which to refer to the *species* in a certain *genus*.

<sup>118</sup> Cf IV,135 πρὸς ἡμᾶς τ' οἰκείως ἔχουσι (people who are on friendly terms with us); V,80. ἦν. παύσῃ ταῖς μὲν τῶν πόλεων οἰκείως ἔχων, πρὸς δὲ τὰς ἀλλοτριῶς διακειμένος (if you stop being treating some cities as friends and others as strangers)

<sup>119</sup> And apart from this she established her polity to such a degree open to strangers and friendly to all, that it adapts to both those who are in need of money and those who wish to enjoy their possessions

<sup>120</sup> See further Ch III, p 91-98 on ἀρμονία in relation to καιρός

<sup>121</sup> I hold that there only three forms of government oligarchy, democracy, monarchy

In the *Niccles* Isocrates has the young ruler of Salamis, Niccles, pronounce the correct way of testing virtue:

[18] III, 44 χρή δὲ δοκιμάζειν τὰς ἀρετὰς οὐκ ἐν ταῖς αὐταῖς ιδέαις ἀπάσας, ἀλλὰ τὴν μὲν δικαιοσύνην ἐν ταῖς ἀπορίαις, τὴν δὲ σωφροσύνην ἐν ταῖς δυναστείαις, τὴν δ' ἐγκράτειαν ἐν ταῖς τῶν νεωτέρων ἡλικίαις.<sup>122</sup>

According to Isocrates, there is no comprehensive or absolute concept of virtue, as he also maintains in the opening paragraph of the *Helen*. There he criticizes those who expound that courage, wisdom and justice are one and the same thing, are not natural qualities, and can be integrated by a single knowledge (οἱ δὲ διεξιόντες ὡς ἀνδρία καὶ σοφία καὶ δικαιοσύνη ταῦτόν ἐστι, καὶ φύσει μὲν οὐδὲν αὐτῶν ἔχομεν, μία δ' ἐπιστήμη καθ' ἁπάντων ἐστίν). With regard to virtue one should differentiate between circumstances and judge according to the appropriate criteria. These consist of relevant situations, in which the particular quality under scrutiny can best be evaluated: justice when one remains just in time of poverty, temperance when one remains temperate when in power, self-control when one is able to control oneself as a young man. Thus one should look at situations in which the person to be judged could be tempted to act contrary to what is expected from him in terms of virtue. When poor, a man might feel himself forced to break the law in order to escape from poverty; when powerful, a man might be tempted to use that power to excess; when young, a man is likely to be impulsive.<sup>123</sup> What matters, therefore, is to evaluate behaviour as a result of "using affairs and situations" (VI, 50: ὡς ἂν χρήσῃται τις καὶ τοῖς πράγμασι καὶ τοῖς καιροῖς), because behaviour is the necessary consequence of this process.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>122</sup> One should not test all the virtues in the same circumstances, but justice in poverty, temperance in power, self-control in youth

<sup>123</sup> Categories in ethics are therefore situational, which does not mean that ethics is based on relativism: the situations and their respective virtues seem to be organized on the basis of practical life, where different circumstances call for different choices. See e.g. the description of Euagoras' virtues in the biographic discourse *Euagoras*: each of them is presented in different stages and episodes of Euagoras' life (youth, early manhood, exile, ascendancy to power, rule), cf. Anst. *Pol.* I, 13, 1260 a 21-28, for *ιδέα* as "circumstance", being a "kind of existence", see above p. 22 & n. 16.

<sup>124</sup> Thus in VI, 50: οὐδὲν γὰρ τῶν τοιούτων ἐστὶν ἀποτόμως οὔτε κακὸν οὔτ' ἀγαθόν, ἀλλ' ὡς ἂν χρήσῃται τις καὶ τοῖς πράγμασι καὶ τοῖς καιροῖς, οὕτως ἀνάγκη καὶ τὸ τέλος ἐκβαίνειν ἐξ αὐτῶν "nothing of this kind is in itself entirely bad or good, but in the way in which one will make use of affairs and situations, thus will the outcome necessarily result from this", see Mikkola (1954), 154-5.

Nicocles himself is an example of this (III, 45): when left without means, he was just (δίκαιος) in his dealings with citizens, and did not injure one of them; when in possession of absolute power, he proved himself temperate (σωφρονέστερος); and, although being still young, he showed his self-control (ἐγκράτησα) in both these instances. By taking these situations (ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς καιροῖς) as examples Isocrates specifies the phrase ἐν ταῖς αὐταῖς ἰδέαις: the “forms” by which to judge virtues are the particular circumstances in which a specific virtue is put to the test. They can be seen as configurations adapted for the purpose of judgment. These “forms” are instrumental in the process of judgment and therefore approximate “method” or “way”: for this usage one refer to the similar use of ἰδέα as “way of presentation” in [8] (see above).<sup>125</sup>

The discourse *Nicocles* itself reflects this concept in part of its structure: chs. 31-35 illustrate Nicocles’ δικαιοσύνη in dealing with the difficulties he met when ascending the throne, and the chs. 36-42 provide evidence for his σωφροσύνη in the execution of his kingship. As Nicocles is portrayed as a rather young man while addressing his subjects, his evident mastery of these principal virtues is also exemplary proof of his self-control.

In *To Nicocles* one encounters ἰδέα in an ethical context. In ch. 33 Nicocles is advised to watch always over his words and actions (ἐπισκόπει τοὺς λόγους αἰεὶ καὶ τὰς πράξεις). He should be courteous and majestic (ἀστεῖος εἶναι περὶ καὶ σεμνός), and thus display qualities proper to a ruler. Although it will prove to be difficult, he

[19] II, 33 δεῖ δὲ χρῆσθαι μὲν ἀμφοτέραις ταῖς ἰδέαις ταύταις, τὴν δὲ συμφορὰν τὴν ἑκατέρᾳ προσοῦσαν διαφεύγειν.<sup>126</sup>

Being courteous and majestic are manifestations of a royal ethos, indeed they are proper to it. To behave like a king should is to use these properties and avoid the inherent dangers to them both: coldness as a result of affected dignity, self-degradation as a result of trying to be courteous. Similarly to what was said above, for Isocrates the virtues are dependent for their value on the use one makes of them.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>125</sup> For ἐν with the force of an instrumental dative see KG I, 542 (A.1), 465.

<sup>126</sup> you should use both the properties, and avoid the danger attached to both.

<sup>127</sup> On the possible polemics with Plato and his Ideas see Eucken (1983), 235 f.

A similar notion is also found in *Nicocles* 30, where Nicocles is speaking on the great importance of the ethical qualities of temperance (σωφροσύνη) and justice (δικαιοσύνη) with regard to the nature, power and use of human actions. If both these qualities are absent, human actions tend to be the cause of great evil, whereas the ones who possess these qualities are beneficial:

[20] III, 30 εἰ 'θέλομεν σκοπεῖν καὶ τὰς φύσεις καὶ τὰς δυνάμεις καὶ τὰς χρήσεις τῶν πραγμάτων, εὐρήσομεν τὰς μὲν μὴ μετεχούσας τούτων τῶν ιδεῶν μεγάλων κακῶν αἰτίας οὕσας, τὰς δὲ μετὰ δικαιοσύνης καὶ σωφροσύνης γιγνομένας πολλὰ τὸν βίον τὸν τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὠφελοῦσας.<sup>128</sup>

Both temperance and virtue are said to be acknowledged by all men as the most valued (29: πλείστου τῶν ἀρετῶν ἀξίας εἶναι). Again, these virtues are seen as properties belonging to a way of life, in this case that of the ideal king. As far as Nicocles is concerned, he proves his claim to these virtues by reminding his subjects of his record: the decisions and actions he took bear witness to his justice (chs. 31-35) and temperance (36-42).

In the *Helen* there are two occurrences of *ιδέα* referring to beauty. Beauty is a motif of central importance to the speech as a whole, especially in its function as the most important stimulant to ethical and moral improvement. It is for this reason that Helen is praiseworthy: her beauty stimulated the undertaking of great deeds.<sup>129</sup> Part of the discourse is a separate eulogy on beauty itself (chs. 54-60), where it is maintained that κάλλος is the most august, most precious, and most divine of all existing things. Its power (δύναμις) can be understood from the following:

[21] X, 54 τῶν μὲν γὰρ ἀνδρίας ἡ σοφίας ἢ δικαιοσύνης μὴ μετεχόντων πολλὰ φανήσεται τιμῶμενα μᾶλλον ἢ τούτων ἕκαστον, τῶν δὲ κάλλους ἀπεστερημένων οὐδὲν εὐρήσομεν ἀγαπώμενον ἀλλὰ πάντα καταφρονούμενα,

<sup>128</sup> if we wish to investigate the natures, capabilities and uses of <human> affairs, we will find that if they do not partake in these properties (sc. temperance and justice), they are the cause of great evil, and that the ones with temperance and justice are beneficial to human life

<sup>129</sup> See the commentary, *passim*



πλὴν ὅσα ταύτης τῆς ιδέας κεκοινώνηκε, καὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν διὰ τοῦτο μάλιστα εὐδοκιμοῦσαν, ὅτι κάλλιστον τῶν ἐπιτηδευμάτων ἐστίν.<sup>130</sup>

Further on (X, 58), beauty is described as a quality that elicits feelings of reverence and consideration:

[22] X, 58 εὐσεβεία καὶ προνοία χρώμεθα περὶ τὴν ιδέαν τὴν τοιαύτην<sup>131</sup>

Beauty is here described as a quality perceptible by the eyes, a property, not only of persons or things, but also of concepts such as ethical categories. In this case we have a quality or property visible only to the mind's eye, which is to say that beauty is here seen as an abstraction.<sup>132</sup>

Isocrates<sup>133</sup> seems to draw an analogy between the technical and ethical usages of *ιδέα* in *Ep.* VI,8-10: the analogy between the composition of discourse and the organisation of one's life. After having stated his customary way of teaching intellection and invention (see above p. 27, [5]), he says that this procedure does not only belong to the sphere of rhetoric, but constitutes a universal principle and is thus also applicable to both everybody else's and one's own affairs (8):

καὶ ταῦτα φράζω μὲν ἐπὶ τῶν λόγων, ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο στοιχεῖον καὶ κατὰ τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων καὶ κατὰ τῶν ὑμετέρων πραγμάτων.

The only way to act intelligently is to follow a procedure, consisting of forethought, reason and deliberation:

οὐδὲν γὰρ οἷόν τ' ἐστὶ πραχθῆναι νοῦν ἔχοντως, ἂν μὴ τοῦτο πρῶτον μετὰ πολλῆς προνοίας λογίσσησθε καὶ βουλευσῆσθε, πῶς χρὴ τὸν ἐπίλοιπον χρόνον ὑμῶν αὐτῶν προστῆναι καὶ τίνα βίον προελέσθαι καὶ ποίας δόξης ὀριγνηθῆναι καὶ ποτέρας τῶν τιμῶν ἀγαπῆσαι, τὰς παρ' ἐκόντων γιγνομένης ἢ τὰς παρ' ἀκόντων τῶν πολιτῶν.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>130</sup> of the things that have no part in courage or wisdom or justice many will seem to be more highly valued than any of these <qualities> separately, but of the things lacking beauty we will find none that is admired no, they are all despised except in so far as they share in this property And virtue is held in highest esteem for this reason, that it is the most beautiful of inclinations

<sup>131</sup> we show piety and consideration to this property

<sup>132</sup> See p. 23

<sup>133</sup> See p. 35 f., 85-86

<sup>134</sup> for it is not possible to achieve anything intelligently, if you will not first of all consider and deliberate, with full forethought, how you must establish your own future, which way of life you must choose, what reputation you must wish for, and which honours you must be content with, those bestowed voluntarily or involuntarily by the citizens

Only after defining these aims (the stage of intellection) can one effectively determine what action is to be taken:

ταῦτα δὲ διορισμένους τότε ἤδη τὰς πράξεις τὰς καθ' ἑκάστην τὴν ἡμέραν σκεπτόν, ὅπως συντενοῦσι πρὸς τὰς ὑποθέσεις τὰς ἐξ ἀρχῆς γενομένας.<sup>135</sup>

There is thus a clear analogy between the composition of discourse and the “composition” or organisation of one’s life. This analogy has two aspects: one with regard to the procedure which underlies both, another to the procedure’s character.

First the procedure as such: both activities of composition are concerned with making choices and selections, and both have two sequential stages of intellection and invention: one, a determination of aims/principles; two, the selection of appropriate means/actions. This emerges from the parallels in diction: (a) the stage of intellection: πρῶτον δεῖ σκέψασθαι τί τῷ λόγῳ διαπρακτέον ἐστὶν ἢ πρῶτον μετὰ πολλῆς προνοίας λογίσσασθαι καὶ βουλευέσθαι πῶς χρῆ...ἀγαπήσαι; this stage entails the determination of the aim to set oneself (τέλος ὅπερ ὑπεθέμεθα); (b) the stage of invention: ζητητέον...τὰς ιδέας δι’ ὧν...λῆψεται τέλος ὅπερ ὑπεθέμεθα ἢ τὰς πράξεις...σκεπτόν ὅπως συντενοῦσι πρὸς τὰς ὑποθέσεις τὰς ἐξ ἀρχῆς γενομένας; this stage is concerned with the selection of means to achieve the end. Thus the discourse’s ιδέαι are parallel to life’s πράξεις, in the sense that both are subject to the procedure of intelligent choice.

Secondly, there is the procedure’s character. This can be described as intellectually rigorous: it is founded on rule and discipline, and these are the only way to ensure a certain measure of success in achieving one’s aim (10):

καὶ τοῦτον μὲν τὸν τρόπον ζητοῦντες καὶ φιλοσοφοῦντες ὥσπερ σκοποῦ κειμένου στοχάσεσθε τῇ ψυχῇ καὶ μᾶλλον ἐπιτεύξεσθε τοῦ συμφέροντος· ἂν δὲ μηδεμίαν ποιήσεσθε τοιαύτην ὑπόθεσιν, ἀλλὰ τὸ προσπίπτον ἐπιχειρήτε πράττειν, ἀναγκαῖόν ἐστιν ὑμᾶς ταῖς διανοαῖς πλανᾶσθαι καὶ πολλῶν διαμαρτάνειν πραγμάτων.<sup>136</sup>

It is with a mentality, which can be described as “scientific”, that one should execute the procedures leading to decisions. The procedure is rigorous in the sense that there should be a necessary connection

<sup>135</sup> After these have been defined, only then you should investigate the actions to take day by day, to ensure that they are in strict accord with the principles established in the beginning

<sup>136</sup> If you search and study in this way, you will take aim with your mind as if at a mark and you will hit more upon what is expedient, but if you will not set yourself such a principle, but will try to act incidentally, it is inevitable that you will err in your intentions and fail in many affairs.

between principle and means (συντενοῦσι), and, by contrast from those who do not act according to the procedure, that one must proceed systematically, i.e. not doing τὸ προσπίπτον. The required consistency may be compared to the consistency to be observed in the composition of discourse, as discussed above p. 50 f.<sup>137</sup>

### 5. εἶδος

The word εἶδος occurs four times in Isocrates' works. In the *Antidosis* 278 f. Isocrates stresses the importance of virtue in the character of a man wishing to persuade an audience. He will try to establish an honourable name or reputation (δόξα) amongst his fellow-citizens, because it is a well-known fact that words resemble the truth more when spoken by a person of good repute, and that arguments (πίσταις) are of more weight when furnished by a man's life than by reason alone. This point is also acknowledged by the philosophers, who furthermore know that

[23] XV, 280 τὰ μὲν εἰκότα καὶ τὰ τεκμήρια καὶ πᾶν τὸ τῶν πίστεων εἶδος τοῦτο μόνον ὠφελεῖ τὸ μέρος ἐφ' ᾧ ἂν αὐτῶν ἕκαστον τύχη ῥηθέν<sup>138</sup>

Argumentation as such is only useful at the particular point where it is needed: this holds good for the ways of argumentation mentioned (argument from probability, argument on the basis of direct evidence), and for all other forms of argument. Εἶδος refers to all the other manifestations of argumentation except for the ones already mentioned: they are the "kinds" of arguments belonging to the overall category of argumentation.

Similarly εἶδος is used in IX,9: Isocrates enumerates the means of poetical equipment not open to use for a writer of prose. These are concerned with content (representation of the gods as associating with men) and with form (license in the use of words), and both categories serve the poets in variegating their work:

[24] IX, 9 πᾶσι τοῖς εἴδεσι διαποικίλαι τὴν ποίησιν<sup>139</sup>

<sup>137</sup> See also Ch V, p. 192 f. ad c. 45-47 on Isocrates' "scientific" approach to myth and history.

<sup>138</sup> probabilities, direct proofs and every form of argumentation support only the part to which each of them happens to be applied.

<sup>139</sup> <they can use> all forms of <poetical equipment> to variegate their work

Again, εἶδος refers to the different ways or kinds in which these means can manifest themselves: their “forms” or “manifestations”. These ways entail both form and content.

More specific is the use of εἶδος in *Antidosis* 74, where Isocrates announces that the excerpt from an earlier work of his just read aloud by the clerk will be the last of such citations. Prior to this, he has inserted three more of such citations, all substantial parts of other discourses. Of these he says:

[25] XV, 74 οὐ μόνον μικροῖς μέρεσιν ἀλλ’ ὅλοις εἶδει προειλόμην  
χρησθαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς.<sup>140</sup>

If one looks at the citations themselves, one can see what is meant by ὅλον εἶδος: they are IV, 51-99 (an epideictic description of the Athenian blessings to Hellas); VIII, 25-56 (a deliberation on how to preserve peace); VIII, 132-145 (summary and epilogue of the discourse from which the citation is taken); II, 15-39 (a list of gnomic exhortations to the young king Nicocles, is the core of that discourse). All these citations are clearly separate sections, marked as such both formally<sup>141</sup> and thematically.<sup>142</sup> At the same time, the citations from VIII and II are introduced and called μέρη. Thus it is clear that they are indeed to be seen as part of a greater whole. This usage, therefore, approximates ἰδέα in the technical sense, under aspect (2).

Comparable to this is XIII,17, where the student of rhetoric is required

[25] XIII, 17 τὰ μὲν εἶδη τὰ τῶν λόγων μαθεῖν, περὶ δὲ τὰς χρήσεις  
αὐτῶν γυμνασθῆναι.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>140</sup> I have chosen not only to use small parts but whole sections for you

<sup>141</sup> IV,51 ἵνα δὲ μὴ δοκῶ (transitional formula) 100 μέχρι μὲν οὖν τούτων; VIII,25 περὶ μὲν οὖν ταῦθ' ἱκανά, ἡγοῦμαι δὲ δεῖν ἡμᾶς βουλευσασμένους 57 τάχ' οὖν ἂν τις ἐρωτήσῃ (transition by introduction of an imaginary objector), VIII, 132 διείλεγμα μὲν τὰ πλείστα περὶ αὐτῶν τούτων, II, 15 ἀρχεσθαι μὲν οὖν ἐντεῦθεν χρή 40 καὶ μὴ θαυμάσῃς (transitional phrase)

<sup>142</sup> See Zucker (1942), 16 “einheitliches, in sich abgeschlossenes Textstück”, Lidov (1983), 285 “thematic development”

<sup>143</sup> to learn the forms of discourse, and to practise their use

That the εἶδη τῶν λόγων are subject to the procedure of χρῆσις strongly suggests that εἶδος is here equivalent to ἰδέα, or at least to a specific group of the manifestations of discourse to which ἰδέα can refer: probably the “kinds” of discourse like eulogy or apology.<sup>144</sup>

Thus it would seem that Isocrates uses the word εἶδος as an equivalent to ἰδέα, where that word refers to “kinds”. It should, therefore, not be seen as a synonym for ἰδέα.

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<sup>144</sup> See Lidov (1983), 285; see also above p. 32 f.

## 6. conclusion

From the survey provided above it is clear that Isocrates' use of *idéa* and *éidos* is in accordance with general usage in the 4th century. All instances can be explained by taking the root-meaning "that which is perceptible by the eyes" as a starting-point, and next by determining its denotation in the specific context. It's specific use as a technical term in the theory of rhetoric, however, constitutes an innovation. Like Plato, Isocrates utilizes the semantic potential of these nouns to introduce them as words referring to theoretical abstractions.

The technical context is of particular interest: those passages which provide information on Isocrates' views about the composition of discourse. Under the heading of *idéai*, which refers to the forms or types of discourse, he presents the following notions:

- (a) in a conceptual sense, these forms are present and available prior to the discourse as such: they are potentialities, of which the writer can make use by intelligent selection;
- (b) when used, the writer will, as it were, actualize the forms: taken together they materialize and make up the discourse, both in its outward or superficial aspect (form) and in its inward aspect (content);
- (c) the forms of discourse cover all its features, both on the macro- and micro-level: i.e. by "forms" Isocrates can refer to all elements from which a discourse is constituted, starting from the discourse as a whole to the particular ways of expression;
- (d) all the forms in combination should make up a discourse which is complete and in its complexity it should be a synthetic whole.

### III. KAIROS

The next technical term to be studied is *καῖρός*. In ch. II there was a focus on *ἰδέα/εἶδος*, and special attention was given to discourse as a synthetic whole, consisting of parts or sections (the discourse's surface structure or shape). Attention will now be drawn to the significance of *καῖρός*. In this context also *πρέπον* will be considered. In this chapter the relations of the discourse's parts to each other are studied. Before describing Isocrates' prescriptions on these relations, a general analysis of the word *καῖρός* will be offered. Then the role of *καῖρός* in early rhetoric will be discussed. Finally it will be seen that Isocrates' use of *καῖρός* is accordance with a general theory of art, that encompassed not only literary rhetoric but also the visual arts and sculpture.

#### 1. *καῖρός* in general.

Determination of the meaning of *καῖρός* is difficult because of the complexity of apparently different usages in different contexts.<sup>1</sup> This accounts for the variety of ways in which the word is translated from "due measure" to "the right moment" (including a number of other translations related to "time") and "advantage".<sup>2</sup> These translations may be appropriate to their individual contexts, but the wideness of range suggests that *καῖρός* refers to a number of concepts rather than one, as one would expect. Is it, nevertheless, possible to identify that one concept underlying such versatility in usage?

An extensive study of *καῖρός* has lately been offered by Trédé (1992). In her book she provides an analysis of the semantic range of the word and, on the basis of that, an outline of the notion as such. In the first part (pp. 25-80) she discusses passages from Homer onwards, and concludes that the word *καῖρός* essentially refers to the "right place", which makes its root meaning spatial. In her view the usage of the word can then be divided in two main groups, one where the denotation of

<sup>1</sup> Trédé (1992) is the most recent comprehensive study of *καῖρος* up to the 4th century BC, a congress on the subject '*Kairos et Logos dans l'Antiquité*', organised by Alonso Tordesillas, was held in Aix en Provence, October 1994, the Proceedings of which will appear in 1996 (Bibliopolis, Napoli).

<sup>2</sup> See LSJ s.v., see also Wilson (1980), Race (1981), Smith (1989/90).

decisiveness is dominant, the other where the denotation of appropriateness is dominant. This division is based on semantically relevant words associated with *καῖρός*. For the first group these are words referring to judgment (*κρίνειν* etc.), understood as the act of deciding by splitting a question, and to the sharp edge (*ἀκμή*). The second group consists in words referring to measure and adaptation (*μέτρον* etc.), appropriateness (*πρέπον*) and harmony (*συμμετρία*). Trédé shows that the spatial meaning of *καῖρός* is primary, and that the temporal meaning, although dominant later, is secondary.

The second part of Trédé's book concentrates on the usage of *καῖρός* as a reflection of the notion to which the word originally referred. The notion is primarily connected to archery (hitting the right mark: Homer). In archaic poetry a moral element is added when *καῖρός* is used to denote an absence of excess or want, and the presence of harmony. To reach this state of affairs is seen as a benevolent gift from the gods in return for human deference. During the 5th century intellectual efforts are made to secure the obtaining of *καῖρός* by providing a rational set of rules, adapted for different spheres of activity (medicine, statuary, rhetoric). The technical approach developed into the acknowledgment, during the 4th century, that to capture *καῖρός* can not be guaranteed by method only, but that room should be left to the elements of luck, divine intervention, and feeling. Thus the outline of the usage of *καῖρός* constitutes a reflection of the general intellectual development in Greece from Homer to Plato.

The general semantic and diachronic division as proposed by Trédé will be a starting-point in the following discussion of a number of passages illustrative of the usage of *καῖρός*. This discussion will provide a context for the analysis of *καῖρός* as it occurs in Isocrates. The discussion by Trédé on *καῖρός* in the orators focuses, as can be expected, less on the specifically technical aspect, which is the focus in § 3 below, and, furthermore, in the case of Isocrates she offers no extensive discussion.

The essentially spatial definition of *καῖρός* seems to concur with the root-meaning of "penetrable opening" as provided by Onians. He suggests that the term *καῖρός* originally refers to the triangular opening through which the shuttle must pass when weaving at a loom.<sup>3</sup> The fact

<sup>3</sup> Onians (1951), 343 f.; see also Kerkhoff (1973), 258-9.



that this opening is the result of an action taken by the weaver, who has to separate the rows of thread in order to create the triangular opening, which necessarily takes a certain, albeit a short, amount of time, makes it clear that both the spaual (quantitative) and, by natural consequence, the temporal denotations are possible for καιρός

From this perspective it is possible to understand the use of the adjective καιρίος in Homer, IV 184-6

οὐκ ἐν καιρίῳ ὅξ' ἀπάγῃ βέλος, ἀλλὰ πάροιθεν  
εἰρύσατο ζωστήρ τε παναίολος ἥδ' ὑπένερθε  
ζῶμά τε καὶ μίτρη <sup>4</sup>

The arrow did not reach the fatal spot if it had, it would have killed Menelaos In that case the archer would have succeeded in his intention To this one can compare VIII 81-84

ἵππος ἐτείρετο, τὸν βάλεν ἰῶ  
δῖος Ἀλέξανδρος, Ἑλένης πόσις ἠυκόμοιο,  
ἄκρην κακὴν κορυφῇ, ὅθι τε πρῶται τρίχες ἵππων  
κρανίῳ ἐμπεφύασι, μάλιστα δὲ καιρίον ἔστιν <sup>5</sup>

In this case the arrow does hit its intended mark the brain of the horse, and as a result the animal is mortally wounded Thus καιρίος suggests the spot as the right one with regard to the intention of the action of attack with an arrow if hit, that spot will prove lethal The lethal spot is the "penetrable opening" through which the arrow is supposed to reach its goal <sup>6</sup>

The first characteristic aspect of καιρός identified by Trédé is that of "decisiveness" This particular aspect is further specified by her as "le καιρός qui tranche" the notion would imply a division, e.g. of right from wrong in the case of judgment At this point a modification of her view seems necessary the texts cited (p. 45-52) never compel to the conclusion

<sup>4</sup> Not in a lethal spot the sharp arrowhead got stuck but before it was stopped by the beautiful belt and, beneath that, by the loin cloth and girdle

<sup>5</sup> the horse was weakened the one that the noble Alexander husband of fair haired Helen hit with his arrow in its head, where horses' manes first start to grow the most lethal spot

<sup>6</sup> Cf. A. Ag. 1292 (Cassandra) ἐπευχομαι δε καιριας πληγῆς τυχεῖν 1343-4 (Agamemnon) μοι πεπληγμαι καιριαν πληγην εἰσω I (Chor.) σίγα τις πληγην αὐτεῖ καιριας οὐτασμενος, Hdt. III, 64 3 οἱ καιριη εδοξε τετυφθαι

that it is *καίρος* itself, that is the *agens* in the activity of judging by division. Rather, the act of judgment takes place by using *καίρος* as a criterion. The spatial denotation of *καίρος* implies a certain quantitative extension, with a clear beginning and end. This distinction is indeed sharp, which can explain the associations of *καίρος* with words referring to the cutting edge and its sharpness (*ἀκμή*, *ὀξύς*). In itself, however, the word *καίρος* does not necessarily imply division.<sup>7</sup>

The following texts can be cited to show that *καίρος* involves decisiveness. One of the subordinate aspects of *καίρος* is that the opportunity for decisiveness is very short, which implies that the action involved should be executed quickly. In other words, one must seize the opportunity when it is there. This aspect is present in Aeschylus *Septem*, 65

καὶ τῶνδε καιρὸν ὅστις ὤκιστος λαβέ<sup>8</sup>

Instances like this make it clear that *καίρος* is closely related to the concept of time. For this see [Plato] *Def* 414 a 6 *καίρος χρόνου ἀκμή πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον*<sup>9</sup>. As is apparent from this definition, *καίρος* is a relative concept: it refers to a point in time in which an opportune goal is attainable. This implies that that particular point in time is unique, and that no other will provide the same opportunity for success.<sup>10</sup> Thus it seems that *καίρος* refers to a segment of *χρόνος*: if one envisages time (*χρόνος*) as a continuous line, one can envisage *καίρος* as a clearly demarcated, i.e. having a fixed beginning and end, segment of that line.

Closely connected is *καίρος'* association with sharpness: this is stressed by the occurrence of *ἀκμή* or "edge" in combination with the word *καίρος* itself or with the idea of the right moment as such (see above). This aspect is present from Homer (X 173) onwards.<sup>11</sup>

νῦν γὰρ δὴ πάντεσσιν ἐπὶ ξυροῦ ἵσταται ἀκμῆς  
ἢ μάλα λυγρὸς ὄλεθρον Ἀχαιοῖς ἢ ἐβίωναι<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See Barrett (1964), 231.

<sup>8</sup> *seize the opportune moment for doing this as quickly as possible*

<sup>9</sup> *kaïros* the edge of time with regard to the opportune

<sup>10</sup> Sicking (1963) 232 & n. 3

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Ar. *Pl.* 256 ο καιρὸς ἔστ' ἐπ' αὐτῆς τῆς ἀκμῆς

<sup>12</sup> [*Nestor speaking*] now as you can see for all the Achaeans it stands on razor's edge to meet mournful destruction or to stay alive, for the proverb see Leaf I (1971), 437 *ad loc.*

Both aspects in combination are understood in Plato *Resp.* II, 370 b 6-8:

ἐάν τις τινος παρῇ ἔργου καιρόν, διόλλυται<sup>13</sup>

Trédé's second main aspect is appropriateness, which seems further specified by the notion of limitation or demarcation: καιρός refers to a spatial extension that has a clear beginning and end and that can be used with respect to quantity or extension and to action. This seems clear from Aeschylus *Choephori* 582:

ὕμιν δ' ἐκαινῶ γλῶσσαν εὐφημον φέρειν  
σιγᾶν θ' ὅπου δεῖ καὶ λέγειν τὰ καίρια.<sup>14</sup>

As is implied by σιγᾶν θ' ὅπου δεῖ (be silent where you must <be silent>), λέγειν τὰ καίρια must mean "speak within boundaries". Orestes instructs the women and urges them to know when<sup>15</sup> to start and when to stop. In this and similar cases limitation in time may very well acquire a normative connotation as well, so that one could translate "saying what is appropriate". It does not seem necessary to postulate the priority of "normative meaning" over "temporal meaning", which is supposed to be a later development.<sup>16</sup> Arguing the other way around is more plausible: the aspect of limitation allows for the ambiguity of time and boundary line. For this line of reasoning one can refer to Sophocles *Oedipus Coloneus* 806-9:

Οἱ. γλώσση σὺ δεινός· ἄνδρα δ' οὐδέν' οἷδ' ἐγὼ  
δίκαιον ὅστις ἐξ ἅπαντος εὖ λέγει.  
Κρ. χωρὶς τό τ' εἰπεῖν πολλὰ καὶ τὰ καίρια.

<sup>13</sup> If one lets slip the favourable moment in any task, the work is spoiled

<sup>14</sup> And you women I charge to be discreet in speech, I to be silent when it is needed and to speak what is opportune [tr H Lloyd-Jones (1979), adapted]

<sup>15</sup> Taking ὅπου of time or occasion, rather than place see Garvie (1987), 200 *ad loc.*

<sup>16</sup> For a study of καιρός in that vein see Race (1981), who maintains that "καιρός was one of several important normative words, often with little or no temporal connotation, whose basic sense is propriety" (198-8)

Οι. ὥς δὴ σὺ βραχέα, ταῦτα δ' ἐν καιρῷ λέγεις.<sup>17</sup>

Because of the phrase ἄνδρα δίκαιον in the immediate context, the connotation of “what is fitting, right, just” seems present. The aspect of limitation remains, however, the point of departure: the qualification of the given boundaries as “right” or “fitting” is a element added to the essential idea.<sup>18</sup>

Pindar applies the notion of καιρός in its normative sense to his task as a poet: each occasion referred to and each thought expressed has its proper place in the song. Because the right moment is short, these elements are best expressed concisely and briefly. This principle of composition<sup>19</sup> becomes clear from a number of transitional passages in the odes, where Pindar reflects on his poetical technique:

- P. IV, 286-7:

.. ὁ γὰρ καιρὸς πρὸς ἀνθρώπων βραχὺ μέτρον ἔχει<sup>20</sup>

- P. I, 81-2 (a “break-off”<sup>21</sup> ending a laudatory section):

καιρὸν εἰ φθέγγαιο, πολλῶν πείρατα συντανύσαις

ἐν βραχεῖ, μείων ἔπεται μῶμος ἀνθρώ-

πων· ἀπὸ γὰρ κόρος ἀμβλύνει

αἰανῆς ταχείας ἐλπίδας<sup>22</sup>

The technical prescription πολλῶν πείρατα συντανύσαις ἐν βραχεῖ presupposes an image of weaving (see above): the texture of the song is presented as analogous to woven cloth<sup>23</sup>. Thus, the song should have density: its themes<sup>24</sup> are closely connected and concisely presented. Its

<sup>17</sup> Οι you are a clever speaker, but I know of no just man who can speak well on both sides. Kr it is one thing to speak much, another to say what is opportune. Οι it is clear your words are brief, but they hit the mark.

<sup>18</sup> See Smith (1989/90), 341, who seems willing to go even further “καίρια and καιρῷ strongly connote, if they do not denote, fitting, right, or just”, Trédé (1992), 63-67.

<sup>19</sup> Clearly emerging from the recurrent opposition of βραχὺ - τὰ μακρά in similar passages see Bundy (1986), 72-73.

<sup>20</sup> the right time has short measure among men

<sup>21</sup> See Race (1990), 41 ff., esp. 56-7.

<sup>22</sup> if you speak in due time (= not too long), stretching together tightly the strands of many things, less blame from men will follow for wearisome tedium dulls keen expectation.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. O. III, 8, P. IX, 77, N. IV, 44, VIII, 15, frg. 179, see Verdenius (1983), 17 & n. 10.

<sup>24</sup> For πείρατα as “themes” see Wilson (1980), 182 n. 13, who interprets the word as the “bond and boundary that gives everything its specific value” in the case of literary subject-matter one can translate on the basis of this “theme”.

concentration must guarantee the approval of the audience. As such the principle has restrictive force, since it necessitates self-restraint on the part of the poet.<sup>25</sup> The underlying image is that of the song as the product of a kind of fabricating or building, clearly expressed in *P. III*,113-4:

ἐπέων κελαδεννῶν, τέκτονες οἶα σοφοὶ / ἄρμωσαν

"loud voiced verses, which skilful craftsmen fitted together". The literary form is thought of as a structure, made by builders.<sup>26</sup>

This general rule is applied to a particular case in *P. IX*,76-8, again in a transitional passage between the description of Telesikrates' victory at the Pythian games and in a shortened catalogue of his previous successes:

ἀρεταὶ δ' αἰεὶ μεγάλοι πολύμυθοι·  
 βαιὰ δ' ἐν μακροῖσι ποικίλλειν  
 ἀκοὰ σοφοῖς· ὁ δὲ καιρὸς ὁμοίως  
 παντὸς ἔχει κορυφάν<sup>27</sup>

Limitation in time and space with resulting conciseness and brevity makes selection necessary: the poet should not strive after completeness, but obey to the rules set by καιρός.<sup>28</sup> Limitation implies that the poet should know how long he can go on with his performance: he must know the measures his sections can have. Thus Pindar says in *O. XIII*,48 (where he breaks off the catalogue of Xenophon's victories, because listing them all would be like counting pebbles on the beach):

ἔπεται δ' ἐν ἐκάστῳ  
 μέτρον· νοῆσαι δὲ καιρὸς ἄριστος<sup>29</sup>

The sense of measure requires the poet to stop cataloguing his client's successes and to introduce a new topic: in this case the praise of the athlete's native town. Not overstepping the boundary set to the catalogue

<sup>25</sup> Verdenius (1983), 18 & nn 16-17

<sup>26</sup> Verdenius (1983), 16-18, esp 17 & nn 7-9.

<sup>27</sup> *great deeds always give many tales, but presentation of a few in colourful language is something for the wise to listen to the right time <and no more> gives the gist of everything alike* (ὁμοίως is interpreted as "in song as in all else" see Carey (1981), 90 *ad loc*)

<sup>28</sup> See Carey (1981), 89 *ad loc*, see also Bundy (1986), 17-18, who paraphrases καιρός here as "judicious selection and treatment", see also Wilson (1980), 181, Trédé (1992), 105

<sup>29</sup> *in everything there is measure the right moment is the best to know*

of victories (in order to avoid satiety in the audience) is the sign that the poet knows *καιρός*: he knows when to stop. This Pindaric line seems to echo Hesiod *Op.* 694 μέτρα φυλάσσεσθαι· καιρός δ' ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἄριστος, where a warning against overloading a waggon clearly conveys the quantitative meaning of right amount.<sup>30</sup>

From these passages in Pindar, that can be characterised as “poetical” in the sense that they contain the poet’s reflections on his technique, it emerges that the accomplished poet needs a sense of *καιρός*. The notion of the right moment, applied to song, requires the poet to know what subject-matter, available to him, to use and what to leave out. The treatment of a subject, like a catalogue of victories, should take a specific time, limited by the audience’s capacity for reception. During this time not all can be said, but a selection must be made by the poet. Thus *καιρός* influences both the length and content of the song and its parts. Ultimately the criterion applied is success: *καιρός* is the time necessary for the part of the song to reach its intended effect. Here one meets the aspect of purposiveness: the rules about the right dimensions of a section are applied in order that the intended purpose of that section may be achieved.<sup>31</sup>

This “teleological aspect” of *καιρός* raises the questions about the method and criteria by which the poet discerned the right timing for his song. From the verbs used in connection with *καιρός* up to the 5th century the image appears that success in this discernment was to a certain degree coincidental. The verbs used are metaphors derived from ballistics (βάλλειν, or its negative ἀμαρτάνειν), which imply the idea of “hitting” or introduce coincidence explicitly (τύχειν). In all cases there is an element of uncertainty: nowhere a method of defining *καιρός* with assured success is offered or implied. In other words, *καιρός* is not presented as an object of rational science. One might say that man in general is seen not in a position to control it, but rather that it happens to him. With regard to *καιρός* a human being is not “agents”, but “patients”.

With the development of rational speculation onwards there began a new stage in the concept of *καιρός*. The new element consists of

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Thgn. 401-2: μηδὲν ἄγαν σπεύδειν· καιρός δ' ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἄριστος | ἔργμασιν ἀνθρώπων; Critias DK 88 B 7 (with ascription to Chilon): μηδὲν ἄγαν· καιρῷ πάντα πρόσεστι καλά; note the expressed or implied opposition to ἄγαν.

<sup>31</sup> Gundert (1978), 63; see also Heath (1989), 25.

the introduction of empiricism and competence, as part of the attempt to gain control over καιρός and secure its attainment: based on a certain degree of specific knowledge one is better able to make the judgment necessary to grasp the right moment or measure. This is especially traceable in the texts of the *corpus hippocraticum*, where the outlines of a medical τῶν are given. To this category of theoretical treatises belong the closing chapters of *On places of the human body*, where it is stated:

ιητρικὴν οὐ δύνάτον ἐστὶ ταχὺ μαθεῖν διὰ τὸδε, ὅτι ἀδύνατόν ἐστι καθεστηκός τι ἐν αὐτῇ σόφισμα γενέσθαι, οἷον ὁ τὸ γράφειν ἓνα τρόπον μαθὼν ὃν διδάσκουσι, πάντα ἐπίσταται· καὶ οἱ ἐπιστάμενοι πάντες ὁμοίως διὰ τὸδε, ὅτι τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ ὁμοίως ποιούμενον νῦν τε καὶ οὐ νῦν οὐκ ἂν τὸ ὑπεναντίον γένοιτο, ἀλλ' ἀπὲρ ἐνδυκῶς ὁμοίον ἐστὶ καὶ οὐ δεῖ καιροῦ. ἡ δὲ ιητρικὴ νῦν τε καὶ αὐτίκα οὐ τὸ αὐτὸ ποιεῖ, καὶ πρὸς τὸν αὐτὸν ὑπεναντία ποιεῖ, καὶ τὰυτὰ ὑπεναντία σφίσιν ἑωυτοῖσιν.<sup>32</sup>

The art of writing is a fixed art: practising that art will invariably produce the same result. Medicine, however, does not have that fixity: one and the same action can produce opposite results. A fixed art does not require καιρός: it is implied that medicine does. In therapy the element of judgment in each separate case is fundamental. As stated in the same treatise, there is one fixed rule of medicine: to be able to judge the right measure in prescribing a therapy. Thus a definition of καιρός is given:

ὁ δὲ καιρὸς ὃδ' ἐστὶ· τὰ σιτία προσφέρειν ὅσων μέλλει τὸ σῶμα προσφερομένων τὸ πλῆθος κρατεῖν<sup>33</sup>

Thus καιρός in medicine implies a judgment of quantities (ὅσων). The importance of defining the right measure appears from the fact that when there is too much administration of foods, the opposite of the intended cure will happen (ἐπὶν δὲ τοῦτον τὸν καιρὸν ὑπερβάλλη, τὸ ὑπεναντίον γίγνεται).

<sup>32</sup> Hp Loc Hom 41 It is impossible to learn the art of medicine quickly because of the following reason: that it is impossible to have a fixed doctrine in that art. For instance, he who learns to write in the one way in which one teaches it, knows everything, and those who know all know in the same way, for the following reason: that the same thing when done in the same way now and some other time does not change into its opposite, but remains always identical, and does not require timing. The art of medicine, however, does not do the same now and the next moment, and does things opposite with regard to the same man, and things opposite to one another.

<sup>33</sup> Hp Loc Hum 44. the right measure is the following: to administer foods in that quantity as the body will be able to surmount.

Finally, the treatise underlines the necessity of knowledge in the art of medicine

ιητρικὴ δὴ μοι δοκεῖ ἥδη ἀνευρῆσθαι ὅλη ἥτις οὕτως ἔχει, ἥτις διδάσκει ἕκαστα καὶ τὰ εἶδεα καὶ τοὺς καιροὺς ὃς γὰρ οὕτως ιητρικὴν ἐπίσταται, ἐλάχιστα τὴν τύχην ἐπιμένει ἢ δ' ἐπιστήμη ἄρχεται τε καὶ εὐτυχὴς ἐστίν, ὁπότεν βούληται ὁ ἐπιστάμενος χρῆσθαι <sup>34</sup>

Thus an element of competence is seen as a precondition to achieve success: it is on the basis of knowledge that the right, i.e. an informed, judgment can be made. Only thus can the role of chance be limited, and can the art of healing be made less coincidental <sup>35</sup>

The following observations can be made about *καιρός* in general

- a) it essentially refers to spatial extension, which is short and clearly defined, as “right point” it has, on the one hand, the connotation of decisiveness and, on the other, of appropriateness, quantitatively it refers to the right amount or degree, temporally to the short span of time in which an action must be completed to achieve its intended goal, thus it can be seen as “extension” both in time and space,
- b) in Pindar *καιρός* is part of his theory of composition, providing rules for the establishment of the right measure of (parts of) the song, which involves the poet's (1) selection in his subject-matter and (2) forestalling satiety in his audience by observing the requirement of brevity,
- c) in a technical context attainment of *καιρός* is enhanced by competence, based on knowledge, in order to be able to make the required informed judgment

Thus the basic concept has two components: the principle of right timing and the principle of right dimension. These components operate simultaneously, but each aspect may be singled out in individual occurrences of the term <sup>36</sup>

## 2. *καιρός* in early rhetoric

<sup>34</sup> Hp. *Loc. Hum.* 46. It is clear that the art of medicine is now brought to view in its entirety which is thus and which teaches in each case the kinds and measures. He who knows the art of medicine thus rests in the least degree on chance: science is at his disposal and has good chance, whenever he who knows it is willing to use it.

<sup>35</sup> Trédé (1992), 172-178

<sup>36</sup> See Kinneavy (1986) 85-87



That *καιρός* had an important place in the early development of rhetorical theory, is likely. It is very hazardous, however, to formulate conclusions about the level of theorizing at this early stage, both because of the primary source material is scarce and because there are difficulties in distinguishing in the few sources available between utterances by early sophists meant as indicating practical choices (presentation of work in progress, see above) or as reflections on those choices.<sup>37</sup>

Still, a number of observations can be made in this matter. First, later sources indicate that the notion of *καιρός* did indeed play a role in early rhetoric. Dionysius of Halicarnassus discusses the importance of *καιρός* in rhetoric in general and points to Gorgias of Leontinoi as one of its earliest theorists (CV12, 5-6):

ἀλλ' ἐπὶ πάντων οἶμαι δεῖν τὸν καιρὸν ὁρᾶν· οὗτος γὰρ ἡδονῆς καὶ ἀηδίας κράτιστον μέτρον. καιροῦ δὲ οὔτε ῥήτωρ οὐδεὶς οὔτε φιλόσοφος εἰς τόδε χρόνον τέχνην ὥρισεν, οὐδ' ὅσπερ πρῶτος ἐπεχείρησε περὶ αὐτοῦ γραφεῖν Γοργίας ὁ Λεοντίνος οὐδὲν ὅ τι λόγου ἄξιον ἔγραψεν.  
οὐδ' ἔχει φύσιν τὸ πρᾶγμα εἰς καθολικὴν καὶ ἐντεχνόν τινα περιίληψιν πεσεῖν, οὐδ' ὅλως ἐπιστήμη θηρατός ἐστιν ὁ καιρὸς ἀλλὰ δόξη. ταύτην δ' οἱ μὲν ἐπὶ πολλῶν καὶ πολλᾶκις γυμνάσαντες ἄμεινον τῶν ἄλλων εὐρίσκουσιν, οἱ δ' ἀνάσκητον ἀφέντες σπανιώτερον καὶ ὥσπερ ἀπὸ τύχης.<sup>38</sup>

This text suggests the tentative conclusion, supported by other instances, that Gorgias was concerned with *καιρός*. It should be noted, however, that the word itself only occurs once in his work: in the *Palamedes* the section on his own person is concluded by Palamedes with an apology for the presence of such a self-laudatory passage, which could jeopardize the audience's tolerance. He says (32): ὁ δὲ παρὼν καιρὸς ἡνάγκασε. This phraseology does not admit, however, of a purely technical

<sup>37</sup> For the sources see Rademacher (1951), on the issue see Schiappa (1991), 73-74

<sup>38</sup> *In every case one must, I think, keep in view due measure, for this is the best criterion of charm and its opposite. But on due measure no rhetorician or philosopher has, so far, defined a method, nor did the man who first undertook to write on this subject, Gorgias of Leontinoi, write anything worth mentioning.*

*The nature of this subject is not such that it can fall under any general and systematic comprehension, nor can due measure in general be apprehended by science, but only by judgment. Those who have trained this <faculty> in many connections and many times will find it (sc. due measure) more often than others, while those leave it untrained will do so rarely and as it were by chance.*

interpretation, and *καιρός* only seems to refer to the specific circumstances dictating the insertion of that section.<sup>39</sup>

Dionysius reflects the empirical element in the notion of *καιρός* that was already identified above in the medical tradition. Both rhetoric and medicine are arts in which the element of judgment is paramount<sup>40</sup>, and it is thus to be expected that both arts develop similar or even analogous methods. One can refer again to Gorgias, who in *Helen* 14 describes the power of the spoken word on the soul in terms of the effect of drugs on the body.<sup>41</sup> This empirical element is, as seen below, also prominently present in Isocrates' notion of *καιρός*. This indicates that it did play a part in early rhetorical theory.

That the concept had a place in rhetoric also emerges from Plato's *Phaedrus* 272 a f., where Socrates offers his short summary of rhetorical teachings by the sophists: they offer instruction on the parts of the speech (266 d 5 f.), on ways to proceed or methods (267 b 10 f.), and on linguistics (267 c 6 f.).<sup>42</sup> According to Socrates, these precepts are, however, to be supplemented by other elements in order to create a philosophically valid rhetoric. To these elements belongs that the orator *προσλαβόντι καιρούς τοῦ πότε λεκτέον καὶ ἐπισχετέον, βραχυλογίας τε αὖ καὶ ἐλεινολογίας καὶ δεινώσεως ἐκάστων* τῶν ὅσα ἂν εἶδῃ μάθῃ λόγων, τούτων τὴν εὐκαιρίαν τε καὶ ἀκαιρίαν διαγνόντι, καλῶς τε καὶ τελέως ἐστὶν ἡ τέχνη ἀπειργασμένη.<sup>43</sup>

The phrase *προσλαβόντι καιρούς*<sup>44</sup> τοῦ πότε λεκτέον καὶ ἐπισχετέον may specifically refer to an early formulation of the *καιρός*-notion and, if it does, it provides an indication that Gorgias indeed entertained thoughts on the subject. In his *Eпитаφιος*, ch. 2, he praises the deceased for their:

<sup>39</sup> All the references to a Gorgianic concept of *καιρός* are significantly late – see Buchheim (1989), 104, 140 (Philostratus *Vit Soph* I, pr. *Vita Ptolemaei* (cf. DK, Bd I, 123 Anm 4), for the view expressed by Sullivan (1992), 318–320, that Gorgias developed a tripartite concept of *καιρός* in his *Helen* there seems little justification – the word itself does not occur in that text, nor can any of the instances cited be plausibly connected to the notion.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. *Ar. Rh.* II, 18, 1391 b 8 ἡ τῶν πιθανῶν λόγων χρήσις πρὸς κρίσιν ἐστί, cf. Grimaldi (1988), 228 *ad loc.*

<sup>41</sup> τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ λόγον ἔχει ἡ τε τοῦ λόγου δύναμις πρὸς τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς τάξιν ἢ τε τῶν φαρμάκων τάξεις πρὸς τὴν τῶν σωμάτων φύσιν, the medical comparison is used by later writers on rhetoric, see e.g. Isoc. VIII, 39, Pl. *Grg.* 464 b 1, 465 a 2–5 and Dodds (1976), 228–9.

<sup>42</sup> See Ch. II, 53 f.

<sup>43</sup> when he grasps the right moment of when to speak and when to hold back, and when, after having learnt concise speech, pathetic speech, forcefulness, and each of the kinds of discourse there are, he understands their right and wrong limitation, then he has well and definitely achieved his art.

<sup>44</sup> On the use of the plural see p. 86–87 below.

τοῦτον νομίζοντες θεϊότατον καὶ κοινότατον νόμον, τὸ δέον ἐν τῷ δέοντι καὶ λέγειν καὶ σιγᾶν καὶ ποιεῖν <sup>45</sup>

Although the word *καιρός* itself is not used, it seems that this phrase captures the essence of the notion <sup>46</sup> In any case, given the prescriptive nature of this utterance and of Plato's just cited, it seems justified to conclude that τὸ δέον was a constituent element of the notion In itself, Gorgias' phrase in its observatory character constitutes a pre-reflective stage in the development of the notion, which receives its place in a theoretical context at the hand of Plato

To grasp the *καιροί*, which, says Plato, is a supplementary task (*προσλαμβάνναι*) for the orator, is explained by Socrates as "when to speak and when to hold back" This involves an extension in time and, because of the activity of delivering a discourse, also an extension in space In that particular segment of time a particular segment of the discourse can be delivered To be able to make the right decision in this matter represents an advanced stage in the orator's skill, which follows on his mastering the elementary technicalities <sup>47</sup> Based on the observation that Plato in his creation of a philosophically valid rhetoric does not so much design new theoretical concepts but is more concerned with the unification of diverse already existing techniques into a synthetic whole and its methodical validation<sup>48</sup>, one can conclude that a notion of *καιρός* did exist in early rhetoric It may very well be that this originally consisted of an empirically acquired sense of timing and limitation, and that the practical capability became subject of reflection in the generation of Plato and Isocrates <sup>49</sup>

### 3. *καιρός* as a technical term in Isocrates.

The word *καιρός* and its derivated cognates (*εὐκαιρία*, *εὐκαιριος*, *εὐκαιριως* and their opposites) appear 87 times in the works of Isocrates In 28 instances the word is used as a technical term in the context of his

<sup>45</sup> regarding this as the most godly and commonly held law to say, be silent about and do what is needed when it is needed.

<sup>46</sup> Pfister (1938), 140 cf A. Cho 582 (p. 69, above)

<sup>47</sup> See Ferrari (1987), 80, see also below p. 80 f

<sup>48</sup> Trédé (1992) 285-288, on the concept of synthetic unity in literature in general see Notopoulos (1949) 1-7 Heath (1989) see also Ch. II, 50-55 on Isocrates' synthetic view of discourse

<sup>49</sup> Trédé (1992), 252

reflections on matters of composition. These instances will be discussed below.

Wersdörfer's discussion of καιρός seems unacceptable in its method, because in his analysis he proceeds from four basic meanings ("das rechte Mass; der rechte Zeitpunkt; Zeitumstände; Nutzen"), a systematisation of connotations which he derives from the lexicon.<sup>50</sup> Of these the first three are acceptable; the fourth, however, is not a connotation of καιρός, but at most a consequence of the observation of καιρός.<sup>51</sup> At this point Wersdörfer's incorrect tendency to identify synonyms emerges: he styles τὸ συμφέρον, τὸ χρήσιμον, τὸ βέλτιστον and τὸ δέον as "gleichwertige Ausdrücke" for καιροί.<sup>52</sup>

In the following paragraph attempts will be made to analyse the occurrences of the word καιρός in a technical context and to account for its usage from the perspective of its denotation as defined in § 2. Finally a synthesis will provide a general outline of technical καιρός in Isocrates.

In chs. 12-13 of his programmatic discourse *Against the sophists* Isocrates introduces a final topic in his critique of rivals in the field of education.<sup>53</sup> From ch. 9 onwards he attacks those who profess to teach the art of political discourse (πολιτικούς λόγους) and who claim to make their students such good speakers that they will miss none of the possibilities a subject offers (ὑπισχνοῦνται τοιούτους ῥήτορας τοὺς συνόντας ποιήσιν ὥστε μηδὲν τῶν ἐνόντων ἐν τοῖς πράγμασι παραλιπεῖν). They promise that these students will automatically be successful after mastering their art: excluding practical experience and talent, they ascribe this success to their "science of discourse" (ἡ τῶν λόγων ἐπιστήμη), which they compare to the "science of writing" (ἡ τῶν γραμμάτων). To this point Isocrates specifically objects in 12-13, saying that these teachers ignore the fundamental difference between both arts: the science of discourse is a "creative activity" (ποιητικὸν πρᾶγμα), the science of writing a fixed technique (τεταγμένη τέχνη). While the use of letters is fixed and remains unchanged (ἀκινήτως ἔχει καὶ μένει κατὰ

<sup>50</sup> Wersdörfer (1940), 55-56

<sup>51</sup> See on the correct interpretation of τὸ χρήσιμον in X,5 Ch. V, p. 168 f. *ad loc*

<sup>52</sup> See Ch. I, p. 3-4

<sup>53</sup> On this discourse as a specimen of the genre ἐπάγγελμα (manifesto) see Ch. II, 27 & n 31 and Ch. IV, 130 & n 86.

ταῦτόν), the use of discourse is of opposite character<sup>54</sup> There a mechanical repetition of techniques is not sufficient for success, because, first, each subject presents its own demands and, secondly, there is a requirement of originality Thus only he will be considered most skilled in discourse (τεχνικώτατος) who is able to live up to these two demands, which imply uniqueness and variability as essential qualities of discourse<sup>55</sup> This is specified by a statement of the criteria for "good" discourse (13)

[1] XIII,13 τοὺς μὲν γὰρ λόγους οὐχ οἷόν τε καλῶς ἔχειν, ἢν μὴ τῶν καιρῶν καὶ τοῦ πρεπόντως καὶ τοῦ καινῶς ἔχειν μετάσχωσιν, τοῖς δὲ γράμμασιν οὐδενὸς τούτων προσεδέησεν<sup>56</sup>

There are three qualities which discourses must possess in order to be considered good these can be labelled by the key-terms καιρός, πρέπον and καινός The precise reference of these terms is not immediately clear, but any attempt at interpretation must take the immediate context into account The demands of uniqueness and originality, the fundamental elements of difference from the mechanic art of writing, imply that these terms operate in the scope of situationality This means that the writer of discourse is dependent upon the fact that each occasion for discourse has a different set of specific demands These demands must be met by producing a discourse that shows the qualities understood by these three key-terms

In the section of the same speech where Isocrates presents his views on discourse (chs 14-18), he first states his belief in the general law of education that teaching (παίδευσις) can only be successful if it incorporates the three basic elements of talent, knowledge and training<sup>57</sup> This principle is applied to the teaching of discourse, which he announces he will discuss more fully What follows is a statement of the characteristics of the teaching of discourse (16), which is divided in two stages

<sup>54</sup> Cf Hp *Loc Hum.* 41 see Trédé (1992), 154 & n 17, 172, Wersdorfer (1940), 80-84

<sup>55</sup> See Ch I, § 3 and Cahn (1989) 121 144

<sup>56</sup> *discourses can only be good if they partake in the right dimensions and in being conspicuously fitting and new but in the case of letters there is no need whatsoever of these <requirements>*

<sup>57</sup> For the *trias paedagogica* see Ch II, 35 36 on XV,183 4, cf 209 210

- (1) acquiring knowledge of the *ιδέαι*;
- (2) making good use of the *ιδέαι*, which contains the following elements:
  - (2a) selection, combination, arrangement;
  - (2b) “not missing the *καιροί*”, which is formulated as follows:

[2] XIII,16 ἔτι δὲ τῶν καιρῶν μὴ διαμαρτεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἐνθυμήμασι πρεπόντως ὅλον τὸν λόγον διαποικίλαι καὶ τοῖς ὀνόμασιν εὐρύθμως καὶ μουσικῶς εἰπεῖν.<sup>58</sup>

Using the *ιδέαι* has two components, the second of which (ἔτι δέ) is introduced by the negative prescription of not missing the *καιροί*. The negatively formulated rule is then clarified by its positive substitute: not to miss the *καιροί* means (a) that the discourse as a whole will have a variety of thoughts, presented in a conspicuously fitting way, and (b) that the choice of words will convey rhythm and melodiousness. Both the components (a) and (b) are presented as governed by *καιρός*. This means that in the composition of a discourse both on the level of ἐνθυμήματα and of ὀνόματα success depends upon understanding the requirements of *καιρός*. From this it can be concluded that the quality of *πρέπον* is concerned with content (ἐνθυμήματα) and depends on *καιρός*. At the same time, that the words διαποικίλαι and *πρέπον* are used also suggest that this quality can be observed from the outside. To be good, a discourse must have such characteristics which deserve approval from the perspective of *καιρός*. This implies that the “thoughts” must not only be present, but that they also be presented in a certain way, governed by *καιρός*. Analysis of further instances will specify what Isocrates means by this.

The secondary tasks in the sequence of actions taken by the prospective writer of discourse (2a + b) represent an advanced stage compared to (1), the level of acquiring technical knowledge. Of the second level Isocrates says (17):

ταῦτα δὲ πολλῆς ἐπιμελείας δεῖσθαι καὶ ψυχῆς ἀνδρικῆς καὶ δοξαστικῆς ἔργον εἶναι (sc. φημί)<sup>59</sup>.

<sup>58</sup> further, not to miss the right dimensions, but to highlight the discourse in its entirety in a conspicuously fitting way with thoughts and phrase it rhythmically well and musically with words

<sup>59</sup> these things, I say, require much study and are the task of a vigorous and conjectural mind.

These skills, which belong to the domain of Isocrates' technical ἐπιστήμη, must be supplemented on the part of the student by practice (the element of μελέτη) and by his particular talent (φύσις), which makes him suited for this field. According to Isocrates this talent consists of a state of mind or mentality, which has two qualities: it is ἀνδρικός and δοξαστικός.

Both adjectives are used by Isocrates in the context of educational theory elsewhere. In XV,261-269 he discusses astronomy, geometry and other such sciences as part of education: although training in these sciences is considered without use for practical life (μηδὲν χρησίμην εἶναι τὴν παιδείαν ταύτην πρὸς τὰς πράξεις), it does have a preparatory function, in that it helps those who are in the process of learning (τοὺς μανθάνοντας ὀνίνησι). When studying these subjects pupils are forced to give their attention to difficult (δυσκαταμαθήτοις) matters and train their powers of concentration (μὴ πεπλανημένην ἔχειν τὴν διάνοιαν), and in that way they prepare themselves intellectually for the study of useful subjects. This preparatory stage in education Isocrates calls "training of the personality" (γυμνασία τῆς ψυχῆς) and "preparation to philosophy" (παρασκευὴ φιλοσοφίας). In its preparatory function, this studious activity (διατριβή) is parallel to what boys (παῖδες) in school do (who train themselves in grammar, music and other subjects), but also more advanced (ἀνδρικωτέρων). Their preparatory training will not increase their capacity to speak well or deliberate, but they will increase their capacity to master the more important and serious studies (αὐτοὶ δ' αὐτῶν εὐμαθέστεροι γίνονται πρὸς τὰ μείζω καὶ σπουδαιότερα τῶν μαθημάτων).<sup>60</sup>

What is meant by the second quality can be clarified by the passage XV, 184, where Isocrates also speaks of the principles of education, now drawing an analogy between his philosophy and gymnastics. Both have learnable elements, the knowledge of which can be imparted to pupils. The next stage, however, consists in training the pupils in the use of these elements by having them do exercises, by habituating them to

<sup>60</sup> Cf. XV,200, according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus CV 1,5-6 the tasks that are part of the πραγματικός τόπος are more difficult than those of the λεκτικός τόπος: the former, therefore, needs a mature intelligence (ἀκμαζούσης συνέσεως) and the grey-haired age (πολλὰς κατηρτυμένης ἡλικίας), and requires study of examples and practical training. At this point Dionysius seems to reflect Isocratean teaching. Cf. also Plato *Meno* 81 d 3 (on the capability of the soul to acquire knowledge by learning μάθησις) τὰλλα πάντα αὐτὸν ἀνευρεῖν, εἴαν τις ἀνδρείως ἢ καὶ μὴ ἀποκάμνη ζητῶν: learning requires manliness to ensure perseverance and effort, see also Too (1995), 155

hard work and effort (πονεῖν), and by forcing them to combine (συνείρειν) the separate elements they have learnt. These exercises serve a double purpose:

[3a] XV,184 ἵνα ταῦτα βεβαιότερον κατάσχωσι καὶ τῶν καιρῶν ἔγγυτέρω ταῖς δόξαις γένονται.<sup>61</sup>

Again, the καιροί belong to the secondary stage in education, which consists of the practical use to which the elementary knowledge should be put, and they govern this use. There is, however, a fundamental difficulty, as Isocrates immediately adds:

[3b] XV,184 τῷ μὲν γὰρ εἰδέναι περιλαβεῖν αὐτοὺς οὐχ οἶόντ' ἐστίν· ἐπὶ γὰρ ἀπάντων τῶν πραγμάτων διαφεύγουσι τὰς ἐπιστήμας, οἱ δὲ μάλιστα προσέχοντες τὸν νοῦν καὶ δυνάμενοι θεωρεῖν τὸ συμβαῖνον ὥς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ πλειστάκις αὐτῶν τυγχάνουσι.<sup>62</sup>

Kairoí are outside the domain of scientific knowledge, which means that there is no fixed rule for attaining them. Only practical experience, consisting of the observation of what mostly happens in most cases, will enable one to recognize them. Thus Isocrates places the καιροί in the domain of the empirical: observation of what mostly happens can lead to the formation of δόξα, an informed opinion. On the basis of that practical experience, gained from previous situations, a potentially successful conjecture in a new situation can be made.<sup>63</sup> In the *Panathenaisus* 30 this point returns as one of the criteria for judging who is effectively "educated" (οἱ πεπαιδευμένοι): (τοὺς) τὴν δόξαν ἐπιτυχῇ τῶν καιρῶν ἔχοντας καὶ δυναμένην ὥς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ στοχάζεσθαι τοῦ συμφέροντος.<sup>64</sup> It is judgment that will lead to success in demarcating one's actions.<sup>65</sup> One

<sup>61</sup> in order that they grasp them (the elements they have learnt) more firmly and that they come closer to the right extensions by their opinions/judgments/conjectures

<sup>62</sup> for it is impossible to grasp them (the καιροί) with knowing, because in all cases they escape science but those who most apply their mind and who are able to observe the consequent as it happens for the most part, will in most cases hit upon them

<sup>63</sup> Cf. XII,9 (φύσιν) δοξάσαι μὲν περὶ ἐκάστου τὴν ἀλήθειαν μᾶλλον δυναμένην τῶν εἰδέναι φασκόντων, see Ch. II, 36-37, and below, 106

<sup>64</sup> <those> who possess a judgment which is successful in attaining the right moment and capable in most cases to aim at what is expedient

<sup>65</sup> See Wersdörfer (1940), 60-62, 67-68, Trédé (1992), 271-275, on "Treffkunst" in general see H. Herter, "Die Treffkunst des Arztes in hippokratische und platonische Sicht", *Sudhoffs Archiv* 47 (1963), 247-290 (= id., *Kleine Schriften*, München 1975, 175-211)



might say that as a consequence of experience the capacity of “feeling” for *καιρός* will be developed.

That Isocratean discourse represents a more advanced level of literature is also stated in the prooemium to the *Helen*, chs. 10-13, where a contrast is made with works of praise on unworthy subjects. Works such as these are simple and easily learnable, because they know only one method<sup>66</sup> (ἔστι γὰρ τῶν μὲν τοιούτων συγγραμμάτων μία τις ὁδός, ἣν οὐθ’ εὗρεῖν οὔτε μαθεῖν οὔτε μιμήσασθαι δύσκολόν ἐστιν). Of his own works Isocrates says that they:

[4] X,13 διὰ πολλῶν ἰδεῶν καὶ καιρῶν δυσκαταμαθήτων εὕρισκονται τε καὶ λέγονται<sup>67</sup>

His works distinguish themselves by employing a multitude of rhetorical forms and quantifications and by the fact that these are difficult to learn: they are qualified as *duskatamāyhtow*, and by that qualification they are put on the same advanced level as the propaedeutic studies discussed above.

The aspect of quantitative extension returns in the *Antidosis*, when Isocrates formulates a number of general considerations on literary composition. On this he has many things to say, but is uncertain in what order to present them (πολλῶν δ’ ἐφεστῶτων μοι λόγων ἀπορῶ πῶς αὐτοὺς διαθῶμαι). Each separate point would seem to him suitable for discussion, but all taken together would provide a strain on himself and his audience (πάντα δὲ νυνὶ λεγόμενα πολὺν ἂν ὄχλον ἐμοί τε καὶ τοῖς ἀκούουσι παρασχεῖν), especially since he has been going on at some length. Insatiability on the part of the speaker makes him run the risk, however, of going on too long (311):

[5] XV,311 οὕτω γὰρ ἀπλήστως ἅπαντες ἔχομεν περὶ τοὺς λόγους, ὥστ’ ἐπαινοῦμεν μὲν τὴν εὐκαιρίαν καὶ φαμὲν οὐδὲν εἶναι τοιοῦτον, ἐπειδὴν δ’

<sup>66</sup> For this metaphor cf. II,35 ὁδός as the method to gain understanding by study (φιλοσοφεῖν) if what it is a king must know, cf. also I,9

<sup>67</sup> are devised and put to words through a multitude of forms and quantifications that are hard to learn.

οἰηθῶμεν ὡς ἔχομεν τι λέγειν, ἀμελήσαντες τοῦ μετριάζειν, κατὰ μικρὸν αἰὶ προστιθέντες εἰς τὰς ἐσχάτας ἀκαιρίας ἐμβάλλομεν ἡμᾶς αὐτούς.<sup>68</sup>

Keeping an eye on εὐκαιρία means to pay attention to measuring (μετριάζειν). Thus the writer of discourse must be attentive to the length of his discourse, its quantitative aspect of extension.<sup>69</sup> If he keeps adding to it, even if by little parts at a time, he will run the risk of overstepping the limit. Then his discourse would be a failure, because it would no longer be appreciated by the audience. From the phrase κατὰ μικρὸν one can conclude that keeping the rule of right limitation is a matter of subtlety and fine tuning: even a slight transgression will cause ἀκαιρία, which means that the discourse fails in having the desired extension.<sup>70</sup>

This general consideration on matters of quantitative extension is expressed in a transitional passage. He has concluded his discussion of the undesirability of sycophants in 309, but wishes to add another point, which he introduces in 312. Thus the passage 310-311 is both meant as a transition and as an attempt to maintain his audience's attention. With regard to its content, this passage offers a reflection on the art of the writer of discourse: as such it could be labelled "poetical" and is parallel in both these respects to transitional passages in Pindar. There, as here, the transitional passage is a rhetorical pause, in which the author expresses his hesitation and claims to be at a loss how to proceed (ἀπορία<sup>71</sup>), but at the same time, makes a conscious choice on selection or treatment of his material.

The programmatic passages discussed thus far allow initially a general characterisation of καιρός in composition:

1] it is at home in the secondary, advanced stage in the process of composition of discourse, where it is the author's task to make good use of the technicalities learned in the primary stage;

<sup>68</sup> *for we are all so insatiable in discourse that, while we prize due measure and affirm that there is nothing like it, yet when we think we have something to add, we forget about measuring and by always adding little by little we bring ourselves to utter limitedness.*

<sup>69</sup> Wersdörfer (1940), 62.

<sup>70</sup> See p. 103 f.

<sup>71</sup> See Bundy (1986), 8 for this rhetorical device in Pindar; Crotty (1982), 30-31 interprets passages such as these as a means for the author to portray himself as "a poet at work" and the literary work itself as "a work in progress"; on ἀπορία as technical term see HWR Bd. I (1992), 826-828 [Matuschek].

2] the ability to compose in accordance with *καιρός* is acquired through practical training and experience, i.e. it rests on *ἐμπειρία*, as such it is a relative concept,

3] it entails the conscious limitation of the discourse, which requires subtlety and fine tuning, its result is a discourse in which order and right extensions are perceptibly present

A survey of other passages can further specify this concept of *καιρός*.

In his paraenetic discourse *To Nicocles* Isocrates lists a number of valuable recommendations to a young prince. To these also belongs advice on how to speak

[6] II,33 ἐπισκόπει τοὺς λόγους αἰεὶ τοὺς σπαντοῦ καὶ τὰς πράξεις, ἵν' ὥς ἐλαχίστοις ἀμαρτήμασι περιπίπτῃς κράτιστον μὲν τῆς ἀκμῆς τῶν καιρῶν τυγχάνειν, ἐπειδὴ δὲ δυσκαταμαθῆτως ἔχουσιν, ἐλλείπειν αἰροῦ καὶ μὴ πλεονάζειν αἱ γὰρ μετριότητες μᾶλλον ἐν ταῖς ἐνδείαις ἢ ταῖς ὑπερβολαῖς ἔνεισιν.<sup>72</sup>

Ideally the prince should hit upon the exact boundaries of *καιροί*, the limitations set on words and actions. The analogy between making choices in discourse (technical level) and making choices in life (ethical level) is fundamental to Isocrates' thought on education: the education of the mind through rhetoric will lead to attaining the capability of making good moral choice (*εὐβουλία*).<sup>73</sup> This analogy is explicitly expressed in XV, 253-257 (= III, 5-9) that passage contains Isocrates' concept of *λόγος* as cultivating force and mark of disjunction between human beings and animals. In 255 Isocrates writes *λόγος ἀληθὴς καὶ νόμιμος καὶ δίκαιος ψυχῆς ἀγαθῆς καὶ πιστῆς εἶδωλόν ἐστι* "discourse that is true and lawful and just is the outward image of a good and faithful personality" (see p. 35 f., 59). To discern the boundaries of *καιροί*, however, is very difficult, and therefore one is wise to choose

<sup>72</sup> *Keep watch always over your words and actions in order to fall in as few mistakes as possible. Best is to hit upon the edge of the extensions and as they are difficult to learn, choose to leave something out and not to be in excess: the norm is to be found in want rather than in what is too much.*

<sup>73</sup> See Usher (1990), 7-10; Burk (1923), 53 f., the analogy is well known: cf. Hom. IX, 443; Plato *Resp.* III, 390 e 4 f.; Thuc. I, 139, 4 (on Pericles) *λεγειν τε καὶ πράσσειν δυνατωτάτος*

brevity rather than exaggeration, because the right measure lies more in the former than the latter<sup>74</sup>

What, then, are the tasks of the writer of discourse on the basis of the general concept of *καῖρός*? In the following passages it becomes clear what specifically is to be done: composition consists of the “use” (*χρήσις*) or organisation of the elementary *ἰδέαι*, an activity governed by the requirements of selection, arrangement, and proportion.

### organisation

In the introduction of the *Panegyricus* Isocrates discusses, among other things, the use of history as subject-matter for discourse.<sup>75</sup> Even though the deeds of the past are, he says, a common heritage, to make proper use of this potential material is not easy:

[7] IV,9 τὸ δὲ ἐν καιρῷ ταύταις (σψ. της δεεδσ οφ της παστ) καταχρήσασθαι καὶ τὰ προσήκοντα περὶ ἐκάστης ἐνθυμηθῆναι καὶ τοῖς ὁνόμασιν εὖ διαθέσθαι τῶν εὖ φρονούντων ἰδίόν ἐστιν.<sup>76</sup>

There exists a direct connection between *καῖρός* and the organisation of discourse, referred to by the word *χρήσις*.<sup>77</sup> As the other two tasks of the writer of discourse mentioned refer to invention and phrasing, it seems probable that organisation entails matters of composition, i.e. the activity of deciding what place to give to the selected subject-matter in the discourse. This activity is governed by the concept of *καῖρός*.

The use of the singular ἐν καιρῷ indicates that what is referred to by this phrase is the abstract notion of *καῖρός*. In texts [1] - [4] and [6] (and others quoted below), however, the plural *καιροί* is employed, which can be explained as reflecting the plurality of cases and instances where the abstract notion is applied.<sup>78</sup> This distinction is

<sup>74</sup> The general preference of limitation over exaggeration in the quantitative sense can be found again in Cicero *Orator* 22,75, where this passage of Isocrates may even have been on Cicero's mind: *in omnibusque rebus videndum est quatenus etsi enim suis cuique rei modus est, tamen magis offendit nimium quam parum*. Note the use of the image of the sharp edge, stressing the narrow and difficult to discern boundary line: see p. 68, Wersdorfer (1940), 57.

<sup>75</sup> For a general analysis of this passage see Ch. IV, 127 f.

<sup>76</sup> *to use them in the right dimension and to conceive what is appropriate to each of them and to make a good composition in phrase* is typical of those who possess practical wisdom.

<sup>77</sup> On *χρήσις* as “organisation” see IV, 131 f.

<sup>78</sup> See KG I, § 348, e), Wersdorfer (1940), 57.

justified by texts as [11], where the singular is used, but clearly qualified as to be applied to the case at hand: τοῦ καιροῦ τοῦ παρόντος.<sup>79</sup>

### selection

One of the sections in the *Helen* (chs. 28-38) is devoted to a eulogistic description of the achievements of Theseus, the founding father of Athens. The catalogue of his heroic exploits is broken off in chs. 29-30 in a transitional passage, in which Isocrates says that he is at a loss (29: ἀπορῶ δέ) how to treat the rest of the potential material on Theseus. Using an *apostrophe* he mentions the possible treatment of the stories on Skiron and Kerkyon, but decides to leave them out (παραλιπεῖν). He proceeds:

[8] X,29 αἰσθάνομαι δ' ἐμαυτὸν ἔξω φερόμενον τῶν καιρῶν καὶ δέδοικα μὴ τισι δόξω περὶ τούτου μάλλον σπουδάζειν ἢ περὶ ἧς τὴν ἀρχὴν ὑπεθέμην. ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων οὖν τούτων αἰροῦμαι τὰ μὲν πλεῖστα παραλιπεῖν διὰ τοὺς δυσκόλως ἀκροαμένους, περὶ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων ὥς ἂν δύνωμαι συντομώτατα διελθεῖν.<sup>80</sup>

To continue cataloguing Theseus' exploits would involve transgressing the proper limitation for that catalogue in this discourse on Helen. Moreover, it would suggest that its author was more concerned about the topic of this section than about the main topic announced at the beginning: the praise of Helen. Thus both the considerations of limitation (καιροί) and of thematic orientation or homogeneity (ὑπόθεσις) make Isocrates decide to be selective (παραλιπεῖν) and to leave most of the material out, because his audience might disapprove otherwise. Secondly, he must present the remaining material as briefly (συντομώτατα) as possible. The quantitative consideration, that the catalogue will become too long and therefore burdensome to the audience, is again prominently present.<sup>81</sup> The requirement of limitation causes the author to intervene in his text. This involves a dual

<sup>79</sup> Cf. [13], [18], [19], below.

<sup>80</sup> But I feel that I am carried beyond the proper dimensions, and I fear that I might seem to some to be more concerned about him (sc. Theseus) than about the topic I originally announced. For both these reasons I prefer to leave out most because of a discontented audience, and to treat the rest as concisely as I can.

<sup>81</sup> Wersdörfer (1940), 63 neglects the point of thematic homogeneity

consideration both with respect to the length of this particular section, a consideration regarding the internal organisation of the discourse, and with respect to the expectation of his audience, a consideration concerning the external situation in which the discourse is presented

A similar case is found in the *Euagoras*, the laudatory biographical discourse on king Euagoras of Cyprus. The greatness of Euagoras would emerge clearly from a comparison with the other kings and rulers of history, but (34):

[9] IX,34 εἰ μὲν οὖν πρὸς ἕκαστον αὐτῶν τὰς πράξεις τὰς Εὐαγόρου παραβάλλοιμεν, οὐτ' ἂν ὁ λόγος ἴσως τοῖς καιροῖς ἀρμόσειεν οὐτ' ἂν ὁ χρόνος τοῖς λεγομένοις ἀρκέσειεν ἦν δὲ προελόμενοι τοὺς εὐδοκιματάτους ἐπὶ τούτων σκοποῦμεν, οὐδὲν μὲν χεῖρον ἐξετῶμεν, πολὺ δὲ συντομώτερον διαλεχθῆσόμεθα περὶ αὐτῶν.<sup>82</sup>

A full comparison as envisaged by the author is dismissed on the basis of two considerations: first, the discourse would no longer be in harmonious concord with the right limitations, which suggests the application of a relative criterium: the section containing the comparison would become too long in relation to other sections (on this see below: **proportion**), secondly, its extension in time would render it impossible to be performed. These considerations, of course, serve as a means of amplification, but at the same time, they reveal once more what application of the requirements of *καιρός* specifically entails. The conscious act of selection (*προελόμενοι*) forestalls these potentially detrimental consequences, and does not affect the comparison as such negatively. The investigation of Euagoras' exploits in the light of those of the most illustrious rulers ensures that the intended examination (*ἐξετῶμεν*)<sup>83</sup> will be equally valid, and that the section's intended purpose will therefore be achieved. Secondly, in its abbreviated form it will have the quality of conciseness. Here, as above, it seems that the principle of

<sup>82</sup> If, then, we were to compare Euagoras' exploits to each of theirs, the discourse would perhaps cease to fit to the right dimensions and time would not suffice for the telling, but if we select the most illustrious and examine them in the light of his exploits, our investigation will be equally good and our discussion of these matters will be much more concise.

<sup>83</sup> On the "scientific" vocabulary used here see Ch. V, p. 192 f. on Isocrates' scientific attitude.

καιρός is applied in both internal (work-orientated) and external (audience-orientated) respects<sup>84</sup>

The correct use of comparison is also discussed in *To Philip*, 143 There Isocrates says that it would be easy to demonstrate Philip's superiority by comparing him to others on the basis of his great achievements Still, he decides against the insertion of such a comparison

[10] V,143 ἀλλὰ γὰρ εἰλόμην ἀποσχέσθαι τῆς τοιαύτης ιδέας δι' ἀμφοτέρα, διὰ τε τοὺς οὐκ εὐκαιρῶς αὐτῇ χρωμένους καὶ διὰ τὸ μὴ βούλεσθαι ταπεινότερους ποιεῖν τῶν νῦν ὄντων τοὺς ἡμιθέους εἶναι νομιζομένους<sup>85</sup>

The decision against insertion of the comparison rests on two considerations first, he wishes to do nothing that others do wrong in this particular case, to use (χρῆσθαι) the literary format of the comparison contrary to the requirements of καιρός, and, because favourable outcome of the comparison of Philip to the heroes of the past, the implication of his superiority to demi-gods The second consideration is in itself intended as laudatory, so that the decision against the insertion of the amplificatory device of comparison becomes an effective amplification itself The first consideration implies that Isocrates himself does wish to abide by the rules of καιρός

In the *Antidosis* a number of quotations from his earlier works are inserted in the main body of the discourse At ch 194 the excerpt from *Against the sophists* is introduced by giving the audience a general characterisation of that particular work as such (λόγον διέδωκα γράψας ἐν ᾧ φανήσομαι τοῖς τε μείζους ποιούμενοις τὰς ὑποσχέσεις ἐπιτιμῶν καὶ τὴν ἐμᾶντοῦ γνώμην ἀποφαινόμενος<sup>86</sup>) He then continues as follows

<sup>84</sup> See Vallozza (1985) 122-123, see also Vallozza (forthcoming), who graciously made the manuscript of her contribution to the conference on *kairos* (see p 65 & n 1) available to me

<sup>85</sup> *Evenso I have preferred to abstain from a form such as this, because of two reasons first because of those who use it without caring for the proper dimensions and secondly because of unwillingness to make those who are considered to be demi gods seem of less worth than living men*

<sup>86</sup> *I wrote and published a discourse in which you will find that I attack those who make unwarranted promises and make clear my own view*

[11] XV,194 ἃ μὲν οὖν κατηγορῶ τῶν ἄλλων παραλείψω· καὶ γὰρ ἐστὶ πλείω τοῦ καιροῦ τοῦ παρόντος. ἃ δ' αὐτὸς ἀποφαίνομαι, πειράσομαι διελθεῖν ὑμῖν.<sup>87</sup>

Too long an excerpt, which would include the criticisms of rivals, would go beyond the limitation set by the goal present in this discourse, i.e. an apology of his own activity as an educator. Again *καιρός* demands selection and the exclusion of a certain part of the material available.

In the *Panathenaicus* exclusion of available and potential subject-matter is preferred in ch. 34. In 33 Isocrates concludes his discussion of what he considers educated men (*παιδευμένοι*), and expresses his wish to discuss the poetry of Homer, Hesiod, and others, in an attempt to silence those who “perform their verses in the Lyceum and talk nonsense about them” (*οἶμαι γὰρ ἂν παῦσαι τοὺς ἐν τῷ Λυκείῳ ῥαψοδοῦντας τάκειναι καὶ ληροῦντας περὶ αὐτῶν*).<sup>88</sup> This discussion he decides to omit:

[12] XII,34 αἰσθάνομαι δ' ἐμαυτὸν ἔξω φερόμενον τῆς συμμετρίας τῆς συντεταγμένης τοῖς προοιμίῳ. ἔστι δ' ἀνδρὸς νοῦν ἔχοντος μὴ τὴν εὐπορίαν ἀγαπᾶν, ἣν ἔχη τις περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν πλείω τῶν ἄλλων εἰπεῖν, ἀλλὰ τὴν εὐκαιρίαν διαφυλάττειν ὑπὲρ ὧν ἂν αἰεὶ τυγχάνει διαλεγόμενος.<sup>89</sup>

Isocrates' decision to exclude is based on a quantitative criterium: even though an abundance of potential subject-matter is available, the good author should restrain himself and preserve due measure. In this particular case, it means that Isocrates must not allow his introduction as such to become too long: otherwise it would transgress the limit set by the *συμμετρία* for introductions. This implies that *εὐκαιρία*, the circumstance in which relative extensions are fitting, involves observing the rule of proportion (*συμμετρία*) in discourse (see below).

Another clear case of conscious selection occurs in the *Archidamus*, when in ch. 24 Archidamus says:

<sup>87</sup> I will leave out my criticisms of others that would transgress the present proper dimension. I will try, however, to go through my own ideas with you.

<sup>88</sup> On interpreters of Homer see Richardson (1975) and id (1992).

<sup>89</sup> I feel that I am carried beyond the proportion prescribed for introductions. It is the mark of an intelligent man not to indulge in abundance, when he can say more on the same subject as others, but to preserve the proper dimension concerning the subjects he will treat on any moment.



[13] VI,24 περὶ μὲν οὖν τῶν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπαρξάντων ἡμῖν ἀκριβῶς μὲν οὐ διήλθον ὁ γὰρ παρὼν καιρὸς οὐκ ἔξ μυθολογεῖν, ἀλλ' ἀναγκαῖον ἦν συντομώτερον ἢ σαφέστερον διαλεχθῆναι περὶ αὐτῶν <sup>90</sup>

A decision not to insert a passage in which legendary history supports the Spartans' claim to the land of the Messenians has had as consequence that this topic is treated briefly rather than with clearness, which would be the result of a more complete and precise account. Observation of καιρός demands selection and, again, leads to brevity.

### arrangement

When announcing the recapitulation of his discourse *On the Peace*, Isocrates says that he has up to that point treated most of the available solutions to the crisis he has addressed. Of these solutions presented he says (132)

[14] VIII,132 διειλεγμαι μὲν τὰ πλεῖστα περὶ αὐτῶν τούτων, οὐκ ἐφεξῆς, ἀλλ' ὡς ἕκαστον τῷ καιρῷ συνέπιπτεν <sup>91</sup>

By contrasting καιρός to ἐφεξῆς Isocrates draws attention to the aspect of arrangement, thus implying that it is inherent to that concept. The available subject-matter, in this case the various solutions to the crisis as discussed in the discourse, is not to be presented without definite planning. The presentation qualified as ἐφεξῆς would mean that the topics would follow one another in succession, the sequentiality being the principle of order <sup>92</sup>. A clear illustration of this is provided in *Antidosis* 140, another transitional passage, where Isocrates says ἀπορῶ δ' ὅ τι χρῆσθαι τοῖς ὑπολοίποις, καὶ τίνος πρώτου μνησθῶ καὶ ποίου δευτέρου τὸ γὰρ ἐφεξῆς με λέγειν διαπέφευγεν <sup>93</sup>. Arrangement entails more than just

<sup>90</sup> I have not treated with precision the possessions we had of old: the present situation does not allow the recourse to legendary history; but it was necessary to discuss them rather more briefly than clearly.

<sup>91</sup> I have discussed most of these points: not one after the other, but as each fell in with its proper dimension.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. IV 26 καλλίστ' ἐξετασάμεν, εἰ τὸν τε χρόνον ἀπ' ἀρχῆς καὶ τὰς πράξεις τὰς τῆς πόλεως ἐφεξῆς διελθοίμεν. cf. IV, 91 δις ἐφεξῆς. on XII 84 see below p. 97 f.

<sup>93</sup> I am at a loss on how to proceed with the rest: which topic to raise first and which one next: the ability to speak in sequential order has escaped me.

sequential order: only when each topic is introduced at its right place can one say that the presentation accords with *καιρός*. The phrase *τῷ καιρῷ συνέπιπτεν* suggests that *καιρός* is seen as a slot or narrow opening, into which the topic falls with perfect fit. On the basis of the intended contrast with sequential order, one would conclude that the aspect of arrangement is dominant here, although limitation is also implied.

The phrase *τοῖς καιροῖς ἀρμόσειεν*, as it was used in text [9], deserves attention here: the notion of *καιρός* is related to the sense of *ἀρμονία* or “framework”, the functional fitting together of parts into a whole. In *Antidosis* 103 Isocrates explains why he has decided not to mention his pupil and friend Timotheus amongst the list of his followers (chs. 93-94). The reason for this is, that Timotheus presents a different case:

[15] XV,103 ὥστ' οὐκ ἂν ἤρμοσεν ἅμα περὶ τούτου καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις χρῆσασθαι τοῖς λόγοις, ἀλλ' ἀναγκαίως εἶχεν οὕτω διελέσθαι καὶ διατάξασθαι περὶ αὐτῶν.<sup>94</sup>

The phrase *διελέσθαι καὶ διατάξασθαι* indicates that organisation (*χρῆσις*) is the point of reference here, of which arrangement is a subdivision.<sup>95</sup> Thus the state of *ἀρμονία* is the end of proper arrangement. The criteria to apply are concerned with content: because Timotheus is too different from the others he cannot be treated in the same group. Functionality and purpose is what matters in deciding on what to include where. This also clearly emerges from ch. 270, where Isocrates wants to define the exact meaning of the words *σοφία* and *φιλοσοφία*, because that topic is in keeping with the subject of the discourse:

[16] XV,270 περὶ δὲ σοφίας καὶ φιλοσοφίας τοῖς μὲν περὶ ἄλλων τινῶν ἀγωνιζομένοις οὐκ ἂν ἀρμόσειε λέγειν περὶ τῶν ὀνομάτων τούτων· ἔστι γὰρ ἀλλότρια πάσαις ταῖς πραγματείαις. ἐμοὶ δ' ἐπειδὴ καὶ κρίνομαι περὶ τῶν τοιούτων καὶ τὴν καλουμένην ὑπὸ τινων φιλοσοφίαν οὐκ εἶναι φημί, προσήκει τὴν δικαίως ἂν νομιζομένην ὀρίσαι καὶ δηλῶσαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>94</sup> therefore, it would not have fitted together to discuss this man and the others in one group, but it was necessary to make the selection and arrangement on them <as I did>.

<sup>95</sup> See p. 30 f., 43 f.

<sup>96</sup> As to “wisdom” and “philosophy”, for those who are pleading on any other issue it would not be fitting to speak on these words, because they are foreign to all litigation; but for me, as I am

The point in this passage is, that a discussion of correct definitions for the words σοφία and φιλοσοφία would be out of place in a discourse that belongs to the dicanic genre. A section containing such definitions would not properly fit into the framework that discourses in that genre should have: inclusion would constitute a breach of convention. But, since Isocrates conceives his *Antidosis* as a fictitious dicanic discourse, in which he is called to defend himself on exactly the issue of his performance in the field of education, the inclusion of this section is justified.

Thus it seems that ἀρμόττειν is related to the fitting together of the sections of a discourse, and that this activity is not merely technical, but also involves the application of criteria of content.<sup>97</sup>

That arrangement in the context of καιρός is linked with considerations of content also emerges from the prooemium of the *Antidosis*, where Isocrates explains that this discourse is special, in that it is "mixed" (λόγος μικτός). To write a discourse like this takes a great deal of effort, because its various sections naturally belong to different surroundings. Some of the topics are at home in the court-room, others are out of place there; still others are purely educational. Finally there is the category of excerpts from earlier works, inserted by Isocrates into this discourse (10):

[17] XV,10 πολλὰ δὲ καὶ τῶν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ πάλαι γεγραμμένων ἐγκαταμεμιγμένα τοῖς νῦν λεγομένοις οὐκ ἀλόγως οὐδ' ἀκαίρως, ἀλλὰ προσηκόντως τοῖς ὑποκειμένοις.<sup>98</sup>

The insertion of sections from previously written works is done carefully, to ensure that the sections selected perform a logical function (οὐκ ἀλόγως) and have their proper place (οὐδ' ἀκαίρως) given the subject of the discourse.<sup>99</sup> These negative considerations are substituted (ἀλλά)

*being tried on these matters and who maintains that what is called philosophy by some is no such thing, it is relevant to define what is correctly understood by it and to make that clear to you.*

<sup>97</sup> Similarly XII,126: in an *praeteritio* on Theseus Isocrates says *περὶ οὐ πρὸ πολλοῦ ἂν ἐποισάμην μὴ διαλεχθῆναι πρότερον* (sc. in X,18-38)...πολὺ γὰρ ἂν μᾶλλον ἥρμοσεν ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῷ περὶ τῆς πόλεως διελθεῖν περὶ αὐτῶν; cf. XV,10; VIII,1; V,155; IX,34; XII,225.

<sup>98</sup> *Much of what I have written before is mixed into what is said now: not without reason nor without proper dimension, but appropriately to the subject at hand.*

<sup>99</sup> Cf. XII, 88 (a transitional passage): αἰεὶ γὰρ οἰόμενος δεῖν προστιθέναι τὸ τῶν προειρημένων ἐχόμενον.

by προσηκόντως “appropriate”, which must again mean that content is a criterion here.

Also in the *Philip* the insertion of a specific section is discussed: there it concerns the treatment of Heracles. Isocrates points to the fact that Heracles’ bravery and valorous exploits have been the subject of many a writer’s praise, but that his moral qualities (τὰ τῇ ψυχῇ προσόντα ἀγαθὰ) were never praised by either poets or prosewriters (109).<sup>100</sup> This topic, however, would provide much subject-matter: a treatment of this topic could include Heracles’ practical wisdom, ambition and sense of justice (φρόνησις, φιλοτιμία, δικαιοσύνη) as the predominant cause of his excellence: his cardinal virtues would be presented as contributing more to his superiority than his bodily strength. There is thus a multitude of available topics to treat (τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἐνόντων εἰπεῖν), but Isocrates finds himself unable to insert a full discussion of the subject, because of failing powers due to his age and (110):

[18] V,110 τὸν λόγον ἡσθόμην διπλάσιον ἂν γενόμενον τοῦ νῦν ἀναγνισκομένου. τῶν μὲν οὖν ἄλλων ἀπέστην διὰ τὰς αἰτίας ταύτας, μίαν δὲ πρᾶξιν ἐξ αὐτῶν ἔλαβον, ἥ περ ἦν προσήκουσα μὲν καὶ πρέπουσα τοῖς προειρημένοις, τὸν δὲ καιρὸν ἔχουσα μάλιστα σύμμετρον τοῖς νῦν λεγομένοις.<sup>101</sup>

The abundance of available material and the consideration that if used in full, this would lead to a discourse which is too long, necessitates selection (ἐξ αὐτῶν ἔλαβον) of one topic. The story that follows (111-112) deals with Heracles as unifying the Hellenes and showing them the need to fight the common enemy of the East. Isocrates uses the Heracles myth to validate his argument, as proposed in this discourse, that Hellas should unite under strong leadership (Philip of Macedon) in fighting the Persian enemy: Heracles is a symbol of Panhellenistic ideology. Thus the story on Heracles is clearly related to (προσήκουσα) the subject of the discourse. Also it is suited to it (πρέπουσα), because the mighty hero Heracles is shown as foreshadowing the role Philip has to play: the story thus has the function of argument by example, based on the

<sup>100</sup> See Laistner (1967), 159 *ad loc*

<sup>101</sup> *I sensed that the discourse would become twice as long as the one read <to you> now. I have kept away, therefore, from the rest and selected one exploit only, which is related and suited to what has been said so far and which is of proportioned dimension to what is said now.*

acknowledged authority of the character setting it. The nobility inherent in the example and forcefulness of Heracles as a role model is further stressed in 113. From the point of view of content, then, the section on Heracles can be qualified as internally relevant (προσῆκον) and externally suited (πρέπον). These qualifications are given based on point of view: one judges the appropriateness of a given section either from the angle of relatedness to the subject or from its effectiveness. Thus, πρέπον and προσῆκον have in common that they refer to appropriateness, but they can be distinguished as conferring that quality on the basis of either basically external (πρέπον) or internal (προσῆκον) criteria.<sup>102</sup>

The decision of insertion is furthermore dependent upon consideration of the right opportunity in the discourse itself, i.e. the place where that insertion should take place. Therefore what is said at the moment (τοῖς νῦν λεγομένοις) is the point of reference for establishing that opportune place. Here it is arrangement with regard to form that is at stake: the Heracles story has its proper place at this instance and can serve its purpose here (καιρός). Moreover, as it stands it is qualified as σύμμετρον, which refers to its proportion or quantitative extension in relation to its context. Being singled out from the abundance of material available, its inclusion in the discourse will not lead to the overstretching of length that would occur if all the material was included.

Again, in the same discourse, the inclusion of a topic on Heracles is considered at ch. 33. The possibility of describing the role Athens played in the immortalisation of Heracles is mentioned, but decided against:

[19] V,33 τὴν δὲ πόλιν τὴν ἡμετέραν φασίν, οἷς περὶ τῶν παλαιῶν πιστεύομεν, Ἡρακλεῖ μὲν συναιτίαν γενέσθαι τῆς ἀθανασίας - ὃν δὲ τρόπον, σοὶ μὲν αὐτίθις πυθέσθαι ῥάδιον, ἐμοὶ δὲ νῦν εἰπεῖν οὐ καιρός.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>102</sup> For προσῆκον in this sense cf. IV,28, XV,119; the distinction is not identified by Wersdorfer (1940), 17-18 and 23, who implies the synonymity of both words, see Schenkeveld (1970), 169-170; on πρέπον in the context of aesthetic theory see Pohlenz (1933), 101 f., 112 f.; see also above, p. 49 f.

<sup>103</sup> and people whom I trust on these historic matters say that our city had a share in causing Heracles to become immortal - in what way you can easily learn later, there is no proper space for me to tell that now

Philip is referred to a instance later on (αὐθις<sup>104</sup>) to read about Heracles, and indeed Heracles returns at a later stage in the same discourse, where the story on him serves its proper function (111-112, see above, p 94 f) Now Isocrates wants to focus attention on the merits of his city only with regard to Philip's ancestors the introduction of Heracles would deflect that focus

### proportion

The *Panathenaeus* contains a long laudatory section on Agamemnon (chs 74-90), which serves its own, particular persuasive function<sup>105</sup> In chs 84-88 Isocrates offers an apology for the fact that he has given so much space to the treatment of Agamemnon's virtue He claims to be well aware of the multitude of things he has said on that topic (84 οὐκ ἄγνοω δὲ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν εἰρημένων περὶ τῆς Ἀγαμέμνονος ἀρετῆς) Although each and every part of that praise has its individual merit, Isocrates fears that taken as a whole the section might be considered too long The point of reference is the supposed audience reaction and their expectations ἐφεξῆς δὲ ἀναγιγνωσκόμενων ἅπαντες ἂν ἐπιτιμήσαιεν ὥς πολὺ πλείοσιν εἰρημένοις τοῦ δέοντος<sup>106</sup>

This potential criticism is used by Isocrates to elaborate his reasons for inserting the section in its present form He would, indeed, have been ashamed if he had made it too long inadvertently (εἰ μὲν ἔλαθον ἐμαυτὸν πλεονάζων, ἢ σχυρόμην ἄν), which would mean that he proved himself unperceptive (ἀναισθητῶς διεκείμην), i.e. he would not have sensed his transgression This, however, is not the case, and his decision for the inclusion is explained thus (85)

[20] XII,85 ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἡγησάμην οὐχ οὕτως ἔσεσθαι δεινόν, ἣν ἐπὶ τοῦ μέρους τούτου δόξω τισὶ τῶν καιρῶν ἀμελεῖν, ὥς ἦν περὶ ἀνδρὸς τοιούτου διαλεγόμενος παραλίπω τι τῶν ἐκείνῳ τε προσόντων ἀγαθῶν κάμοι προσηκόντων εἰπεῖν<sup>107</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Cf. XII,34 Ep VII,10, see LSJ s.v. Π 3

<sup>105</sup> On the section as a whole see Race (1978), 175-185

<sup>106</sup> when they (= the topics on Agamemnon) are read one after the other, all would censure the fact that much more has been said than should have been said.

<sup>107</sup> But I considered that it would be less objected to, if I would seem to some not to be caring about the right dimensions in this section than when in my discussion of this man I would leave out some of the merits that pertain to him and what is relevant for me to mention.

It was a conscious decision to speak at such length on Agamemnon and so run the risk of being criticized for speaking too long. Speaking too long is a sign of disregarding the καιροί, the proper limitations expected by the audience. This point is elaborated further (86):

[21] XII,86 ὥμην δὲ καὶ παρὰ τοῖς χαριεστάτοις τῶν ἀκροατῶν εὐδοκμήσειν, ἣν φαίνωμαι περὶ ἀρετῆς μὲν τοὺς λόγους ποιούμενος, ὅπως δὲ ταύτης ἀξίως ἐρῶ μᾶλλον σπουδάζων ἢ περὶ τὴν τοῦ λόγου συμμετρίαν, καὶ ταῦτα σαφῶς εἰδὼς τὴν μὲν περὶ τὸν λόγον ἀκαιρίαν ἀδοξότερον ἐμὲ ποιήσουσαν, τὴν δὲ περὶ τὰς πράξεις εὐβουλίαν αὐτοὺς τοὺς ἐκαινουμένους ὠφελήσουσαν.<sup>108</sup>

Isocrates appeals to the *connaisseurs* in his audience, who would appreciate him giving priority to content over form in this instance. If the subject is virtue, then one should do everything needed for doing justice to that lofty theme, even if this means that the rules for relative length of the parts of the discourse have to be disregarded. Thus the decision called for here, to include more of Agamemnon's exploits, is the right one. Here one can see the close relationship of καιρός and συμμετρία: the observance of the right limitations (i.e. beginning and ending a section at the right point) is the method for ensuring that the discourse has correct proportion.<sup>109</sup>

Later on in the *Panathenaiscus* Isocrates discusses three different kinds of government (democracy, aristocracy, monarchy, chs. 132-133) and typifies them according to their general character and capacities. He says at 134 that one could say more on this subject, but that he will single out one of the polities for further discussion: Athen's ancestral constitution, which he will show to be of greater worth and source of more benefits than the Spartan constitution. This section is introduced thus (135):

<sup>108</sup> And I thought that I would receive approval from the most accomplished of my hearers, if in writing a discourse on virtue, I would show myself to be more concerned about doing justice to the subject than about the proportion of the discourse, and that <I did> in the clear knowledge that the lack of right dimensions in the discourse would prove to be detrimental to my reputation, but that making the right decision on the exploits would be helpful to the ones that are praised.

<sup>109</sup> That limitation was also relevant to Euripides can be concluded from his implicit criticism of Aeschylus' inappropriate use of catalogues *Suppl* 849-850, *Phoen* 751-752, see Verdenius (1983), 18 & n. 18.

[22] XII,135 ἔσται δ' ὁ λόγος τοῖς μὲν ἡδέως ἂν ἀκούσασι πολιτεῖαν χρηστήν ἐμοῦ διεξιόντος οὐτ' ὀχληρὸς οὐτ' ἄκαιρος, ἀλλὰ σύμμετρος καὶ προσήκων τοῖς πρότερον εἰρημένους <sup>110</sup>

The expected reaction in the audience favourable to him and his subject will be one of approval, provided that the section is of the right proportion (being in the right place in the discourse and of the right extension) and that its content is related to the subject of the discourse. An audience of a different disposition, one that does not take pleasure in serious discourse but prefers the contentious orators of the great festivals railing at each other, or the laudatory discourses on trivial subjects or lawless men, will believe that it is going on too long (τούτοις δ' αὐτὸν οἶμαι δόξειν πολὺ μακρότερον εἶναι τοῦ δέοντος)

Thus the disposition of the audience appears to play a decisive role: those interested in serious discourse will not object to a prolonged section, provided it deals with a subject worthy of such treatment. Their sense of τὸ δέον differs from that of an audience that prefers spectacular debate or paradoxographic virtuoso speech. They disapprove of such prolonged sections. The element of relativism in relation to the different recipients of the discourse and their evaluation of it seems to be more prominent in the *Panathenaeus* than elsewhere in theoretical passages. The notion that prolonged treatment of morally worthy subject-matter, even if this leads to disregard what *kairos* demands, has priority over form can be seen as a development in Isocrates' thinking on matters of composition <sup>111</sup>

### synthesis

The previous survey of passages where Isocrates uses *kairos* in a context of theory of composition points to the following conclusions

1] the capacity to discern the *kairoí* or proper dimensions of discourse and its parts constitutes an advanced level of rhetorical skill, this level is attained by training the pupil's technical abilities and developing his judgment (δόξα),

<sup>110</sup> What I am going to say will to those who like to hear me discussing a good polity be neither a burden nor without proper dimension: but of right proportion and relevant to what has been said before

<sup>111</sup> Trédé (1992) 275-282



2] the sense of proper dimensions is closely linked to what is conceived as the order of discourse; to achieve that state of order the writer of discourse must organise his text (χρησις), a task consisting of the practical activities of selection, arrangement, and proportioning;

3] the notion of *καιρός* itself has as its constituents limitedness, situationality, and purposiveness.

Compared to his predecessors, Isocrates displays not only an awareness of the necessities implied by *καιρός* on a practical level, but also offers theoretical reflection on the notion as such. In claiming a place for *καιρός* in advanced education in rhetoric, Isocrates and Plato represent similar views. In the case of Isocrates, however, the notion is treated more elaborately in its technical consequences, as can be expected of the man who was primarily interested in presenting his ideas on an education based on rhetoric. Matters of technique and method are, at the same time, firmly grounded in the concept of *δόξα*, thereby providing rhetoric with a philosophical base.

##### 5. Isocrates' notion of *καιρός* in the context of craftsmanship

Some of the technical vocabulary used by Isocrates in the context of his notion of *καιρός* suggests, as was the case with Pindar's utterances on his poetical technique, that in formulating his ideas on the rules of composition, the image of building is a leading thought. The first group of words is that related to "measuring": *μετριάζειν*, *μετριότης*, *συμμετρία*, *σύμμετρος*. The second group involves "fitting together": *ἀρμόττειν*. Thirdly, the words used to qualify the finished discourse as a product which is seen to be well-made and which is as such perceptible (*πρέπον*, *διαποικίλαι*) should also be referred to here. Of course, the word *καιρός* itself occurs frequently in a "technical" context as well. Since the discourse is described in terms of a structure to be fitted together by the author, an activity in which measurement plays an important role, the technical vocabulary could be characterised as "tectonics".

It should not be surprising that there was common ground between the spheres of craftsmanship and intellectualism. There are reports of close contacts between intellectuals and skilled workers in Athens, such as between Pericles, Anaxagoras and the sculptor Pheidias. The clearest example of an intellectual bridge between thinkers and

manual workers is Socrates and his frequent discussions with craftsmen on the subject of their craft itself.<sup>112</sup> This common ground existed especially between philosophers, mathematicians and scientists on the one hand, and craftsmen such as architects, engineers, painters and sculptors on the other. Both groups were much concerned with numbers and measurement as the basis of proportion and harmony.

An instructive example of the cross-current between literature and crafts can be found at Aeschylus *Choephoroi* 205 f., the so-called “footprint-scene” in which Orestes’ recognition finds further support (Electra speaking):

καὶ μὴν στίβοι γε, δεύτερον τεκμήριον,  
ποδῶν, ὁμοῖοι, τοῖς τ’ ἐμοῖσιν ἐμπερεῖς<sup>113</sup>

The evidence of the footprints is substantiated further at 209-10:

πτέρναι τενόντων θ’ ὑπογραφαὶ μετρούμεναι  
εἰς ταὐτὸ συμβαίνουσι τοῖς ἐμοῖς στίβοις.<sup>114</sup>

The vocabulary used in this passage strongly suggests that one is to think of proportion rather than size here: the phrase μετρούμεναι εἰς ταὐτὸ συμβαίνουσι can be interpreted as “resulting in the same proportions”. This interpretation finds support in 229, where Orestes is said to be σύμμετρος to his sister and with this term a key word of the notion “proportion” is used.<sup>115</sup> There are indications that proportion was a concern of artists in this early period (the *Choephoroi* is to be dated 458 BC): it is said of the sculptor Pythagoras of Rhegium (fl. 480/460 BC) that he raised theoretical questions about the proportions of the human form.<sup>116</sup> Thus it would seem plausible that Aeschylus reflects a theory in circulation at the time.

Vocabulary involving craftsmanship occurs frequently in Plato, where the arts are often used as a point of reference. In the *Politicus* the nature of measurement is discussed, in the context of an examination of

<sup>112</sup> Burford (1972), 129-135, Xen. *Mem.* III, 10, 9-15, 10, 1 f., 10, 6 f. recorded conversations between Socrates and Pistias the armourer, Parrhasius the painter, and Cleitophon the sculptor, it should be noted that already in Homer there is a close link between σοφία and skilled craftsmanship see Verdenius (1983), 20 f.

<sup>113</sup> And then, of course, his footprints, a second proof like mine, resembling mine

<sup>114</sup> The heels and the contours of his tendons, when measured, tally with my own footprints

<sup>115</sup> Burkert (1963), 177, see also Garvie (1987), 96-97, 100-102, I read, with M, συμμέτρον instead of σύμμετρον

<sup>116</sup> Diog. Laert. VIII, 47 πρώτων δοκοῦντα ῥυθμοῦ καὶ συμμετρίας ἐστοχάζεσθαι, see also Pliny *N.H.* 34, 58 on Myron *numerosior in arte quam Polyclitus et in symmetria diligentior*, see Isager (1991), 99-100

weaving (283 c 2 f.): the point of departure is an consideration of excess and deficiency in general (πρῶτον τοίνυν ἴδωμεν πᾶσαν τὴν τε ὑπερβολὴν καὶ τὴν ἔλλειψιν), which should lead to establishing a norm by which to judge what is said as too much or too little (ἵνα κατὰ λόγον ἐπαινώμεν καὶ ψέγωμεν τὰ μακρότερα τοῦ δέοντος ἐκάστοτε λεγόμενα καὶ τάναντία). Of the two kinds of the art of measurement (ἡ μετρητική) one is concerned with the relative greatness and smallness of objects, the other with size in accordance with a certain standard or norm (τὸ μέτρον). This second kind of measurement is basic to all arts concerned with τὸ πρέπον, ὁ καιρός, τὸ δέον καὶ πάνθ' ὅποσα εἰς τὸ μέσον ἀποκίσθη τῶν ἐσχάτων. The point here is that this art of measurement is primarily concerned with determining what is the right length according to the norm, which is dependent upon the purpose involved. Thus the length of a discussion of weaving should be judged by whether it proves to be conducive to the promotion of the dialectical abilities of the participants in the discussion (286 c 5 - 287 b 2). In normative measuring, therefore, purposiveness is the main element.<sup>117</sup>

To this might be compared what is said on "the good man speaking for the best" (ὁ ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιστον λέγων) in *Gorgias* 503 d 6 f., where the same notion of purposive measurement is applied to rhetoric. Here the analogy between rhetoric and craftsmanship is explicitly made. The good man speaking for the best

ἂν λέγῃ ἄλλο τι οὐκ εἰκὴ ἐρεῖ, ἀλλ' ἀποβλέπων πρὸς τι; ὥσπερ καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι πάντες δημιουργοὶ βλέποντες πρὸς τὸ αὐτῶν ἔργον ἕκαστος οὐκ εἰκὴ ἐκλεγόμενος προσφέρει (ἂ προσφέρει) [πρὸς τὸ ἔργον τὸ αὐτῶν], ἀλλ' ὅπως ἂν εἰδὸς τι αὐτῷ σχῆ τοῦτο ὃ ἐργάζεται.<sup>118</sup>

The speaker, as every craftsman or artist, has the purpose of giving form to his work: he is, therefore, conscious of the goal he wants to achieve (the element of purpose).<sup>119</sup> This is clarified by an example:

οἷον εἰ βούλει ἰδεῖν τοὺς ζωγράφους, τοὺς οἰκοδόμους, τοὺς ναυπηγούς, τοὺς ἄλλους πάντας δημιουργούς, ὅντινα βούλει αὐτῶν, ὥς εἰς τάξιν τινὰ ἕκαστος ἕκαστον τίθησιν ὃ ἂν τιθῇ, καὶ προαναγκάζει τὸ ἕτερον τῷ ἐτέρῳ πρέπον τε

<sup>117</sup> Heath (1989), 24-25

<sup>118</sup> [Dodds' text] will certainly not say what he says at random, but keeping an eye on something Just as all other craftsmen, with an eye to their own function, each of them applies the measures he applies, not at random but selecting them in order to get the thing he is making to acquire a particular form [tr. Dodds]

<sup>119</sup> On the background of artistic theory in general see Webster (1939), esp 169-171.

εἶναι καὶ ἀρμόττειν, ἕως ἂν τὸ ἅπαν συστήσῃται τεταγμένον τε καὶ κεκοσμημένον πρᾶγμα.<sup>120</sup>

As πρόπον, ἀρμόττειν, προσαναγκάζει (= τὸ δέον) indicate, the ultimate goal of producing a thing with structure and order depends on applying the principle of measurement according to a norm, as described above. This general principle is applied specifically to rhetoric, especially in its philosophically valid form, in *Phaedrus* 272 ab.<sup>121</sup>

The relevance of the vocabulary of craftsmanship for Isocrates' theory of composition can be further substantiated by looking more precisely at the art of statuary. Comparison of poetry and rhetoric on the one hand, and sculpture on the other, can be attested from Pindar onwards (*N.* V,1 f.):

οὐκ ἀνδριαντοποιός εἰμ', ὥστ' ἐλινύσοντα ἐργά-  
ζεσθαι ἀγάλματ' ἐπ' αὐτὰς βαθμίδος  
ἔσταότ'· ἀλλ' ἐπὶ πάσας  
ὀλκάδος ἔν τε ἀκάτῳ, γλυκεῖ' αἰοιδά,  
στεῖχ' ἀπ' Αἰγίνας διαγγέλλοισα<sup>122</sup>

The same comparison of the sedentary statue and the activity of song<sup>123</sup> occurs in Isocrates as well, albeit that the laudatory song has been replaced by the prose encomium. In the *Euagoras* Isocrates says:

ἐγὼ δ', ὦ Νικόκλεις, ἡγοῦμαι καλὰ μὲν εἶναι μνημεῖα καὶ τὰς τῶν σωμάτων εἰκόνας, πολὺ μὲντοι πλείονος ἀξίας τὰς τῶν πράξεων καὶ τῆς διανοίας, ἃς ἐν τοῖς λόγοις ἂν τις μόνον τοῖς τεχνικῶς ἔχουσι θεωρήσειεν... (δισπύρουσε ἰσπρεπερεδ) ὅτι τοὺς μὲν τύπους ἀναγκαῖον παρὰ τούτοις εἶναι μόνοις, παρ' οἷς ἂν σταθῶσι, τοὺς δὲ λόγους ἐξενεχθῆναι θ' οἷόν τ' ἐστίν...<sup>124</sup>

<sup>120</sup> Consider, for example, the painters, architects, shipwrights and all the other craftsmen you would care to name: each of them arranges whatever it is he arranges into some sort of structure, and compels each thing to be appropriate to another and to fit them together, until he has composed the whole into a thing of structure and order [tr. Heath, adapted].

<sup>121</sup> Heath (1989), 18-24.

<sup>122</sup> I am no maker of statues, who fashions figures to stand unmoved on the self-same pedestal. On every merchantman, in every skiff, go, sweet song, from Aegina and spread the news [tr. Bowra].

<sup>123</sup> Cf. *I.* II,46, see Race (1990), 63, 69-70 & n 30, cf. also Thgn 237-254; see Too (1995), 187-8.

<sup>124</sup> I think, Nicocles, that representations of the body are beautiful monuments, but those of exploits and spirit are of much greater value, when, that is, they can be observed in discourse

Here Isocrates shows himself a, probably conscious, follower of Pindar's comparison of the activity of the sculptor to that of the literary author. The comparison shows that both spheres were thought to be akin, but is intended to prove the superiority of literature.<sup>125</sup>

Of special interest, however, are the fragments of a treatise by the sculptor Polycleitus, known by as the "Kanon", which contains some evidence of reflection on the art of statuary. Three utterances of Polycleitus can plausibly be attributed to this treatise, because they are either quotations, or paraphrases by another author (Plutarch). They can safely be taken to reflect the essence of Polycleitus' thought.<sup>126</sup> Two of these are relevant here, because they contain specific technical vocabulary.

The first quotation is found in Philo of Byzantium, known as "the Mechanic", who wrote a treatise *Mechanica*, to be dated in the second half of the third century BC. The introduction to Book IV on the construction of catapults contains a discussion on the best method of developing "construction-plans" (συντάξεις). These can only be successfully devised in a long process, in which both theory and practical experience have an essential role. But even these plans do not guarantee that all catapults build according to them have identical mechanical qualities. The slightest deviation results in divergence in, e.g., reach of the device. As a consequence, Philo argues, the constructor should work with a maximum of accuracy. The necessity to work with accuracy is first underlined by a quotation from Polycleitus:

ὥστε τὴν ὑπὸ Πολυκλείτου τοῦ ἀνδριαντοποιοῦ ρηθεῖσαν φωνὴν οἰκείαν εἶναι τῷ μέλλοντι λέγεσθαι· τὸ γὰρ εὖ παρὰ μικρὸν διὰ πολλῶν ἀριθμῶν ἔφθινεσθαι.<sup>127</sup>

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composed according to the art. because images must necessarily remain among those, where they have been set up; but discourse can be spread by publication...

<sup>125</sup> Cf. II,36, the close relation between statuary and rhetoric is implied in Gorg. *Hel.* 18 (see below), in another sense the image of the statue is used by Alcibiades *Soph.* 27-28, on the concept "ut pictura poesis", possibly originating with Simonides, see Schmid-Stahlin I,1, p. 516, Anm. 6; Philipp (1968), 58-59.

<sup>126</sup> References and quotations in context are presented and discussed by Philipp (1990), 135-155; see also Moser von Filseck (1990), 1-31 on the archaeological material.

<sup>127</sup> Consequently the word from the sculptor Polycleitus is relevant to what I am going to say. He said: "success occurs by a small margin through many numbers."

The phrase παρὰ μικρόν refers to the small margin left to the technician: a small deviation will lead to big divergence, as in the case of plans for catapults. This seems to be a plausible interpretation of the quotation, in which the consequences of small alterations are discussed. To manage these difficulties will only be possible when the technician has theoretical knowledge combined with practical experience. The fact that Polycleitus is quoted as confirmation of this precept can be taken to indicate that he was also no pure theorist, but adhered to the practical wisdom of the craftsman. For these, experience and theory are complementary.<sup>128</sup> Furthermore, the phrase διὰ πολλῶν ἀριθμῶν suggests that to achieve success in a technical activity the role of “many numbers” is essential.<sup>129</sup> By this phrase he probably refers to proportion, as will become clear further on.

The second quotation occurs in a later source: Galen's *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis* 5, which has a discussion of Chrysippus' notion that healthiness in the body consists of the right proportion (συμμετρία) of warm and cold, and dry and humid. These are the elements of bodies (στοιχεῖα τῶν σωμάτων). He continues:

τὸ δὲ κάλλος οὐκ ἐν τῇ τῶν στοιχείων, ἀλλὰ ἐν τῇ τῶν μορίων συμμετρίᾳ συνίστασθαι νομίζει, δακτύλου πρὸς δάκτυλον δηλονότι καὶ συμπάντων αὐτῶν πρὸς τε μετακάρπιον καὶ καρπὸν καὶ τούτων πρὸς πῆχυν καὶ πήχεως πρὸς βραχίονα καὶ πάντων πρὸς πάντα, καθάπερ ἐν τῷ Πολυκλείτου Κανόνι γέγραπται. πάσας γὰρ ἐκδιδάξας ἡμᾶς ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ συγγράμματι τὰς συμμετρίας τοῦ σώματος ὁ Πολύκλειτος ἔργῳ τὸν λόγον ἐβεβαίωσε δημιουργήσας ἀνδριάντα κατὰ τὰ τοῦ λόγου προστάγματα καὶ καλέσας δὴ καὶ αὐτὸν τὸν ἀνδριάντα καθάπερ καὶ τὸ σύγγραμμα Κανόνα. τὸ μὲν δὲ κάλλος τοῦ σώματος ἐν τῇ τῶν μορίων συμμετρίᾳ κατὰ πάντας ἰατροῦς τε καὶ φιλοσόφους ἐστίν.<sup>130</sup>

<sup>128</sup> Philipp (1990), 137-138

<sup>129</sup> On a possible relationship of Polycleitus' thoughts with Pythagoreanism see Raven (1951), Philipp (1990), 144

<sup>130</sup> but he thinks that beauty does not consist in the right proportion of the elements, but in that of the parts that is to say <in the right proportion of> one finger to another finger and of all of them to the palm of the hand and the wrist and of these to the forearm, and of the forearm to the <whole> arm, and of all <further parts> to all <others>, as it is written down in the Canon of Polycleitus. For Polycleitus instructs us in that book of his on all proportions of the body, and he confirmed this principle in practice by making a statue according to the prescriptions in his account, and he named the statue like his book “Canon” Beauty of the body, then, consists in the right proportion of the parts according to all physicians and philosophers

Beauty (κάλλος), according to Polycleitus in his treatise (σύγγραμμα) entitled "Canon", consists of συμμετρία τῶν μορίων: the right proportion of all the parts of the body to each other. This principle is applied to all parts, beginning with the extremities (fingers) to the hand, the hand to the forearm, the forearm to the whole arm, and so on. This leads up to an elaborate whole of relative measures, which in its entirety results in συμμετρία, the right proportion as it is manifest in the complete system of measures. Obviously κάλλος is the aim the artist seeks to attain in his work of art: if he is successful, his work will have the quality of beauty. In that case κάλλος coincides with τὸ εὖ, as it is used above by Philo Mechanicus. If this is correct, then the phrase διὰ πολλῶν ἀριθμῶν refers to the elaborate whole of relative measures constituting συμμετρία. Clearly these measures are not absolute figures, but numbers which indicate a relation in size of one part to another.

Confirmation for this interpretation is found in another passage of Galen's work, where he discusses the difficulties in finding the mean (τὸ μέσον). He says (*De temp.* I,9):

τὸ δὲ ἀσκήσαι γνωρίζειν ἐτοίμως ἐν ἐκάστῳ γένει ζῴου καὶ κατὰ τὰ σύμπαντα τὸ μέσον οὐ τοῦ τυχόντος ἀνδρός, ἀλλ' ἐσχάτως ἐστὶ φιλοπόνου καὶ διὰ μακρᾶς ἐμπειρίας καὶ πολλῆς γνώσεως ἀπάντων τῶν κατὰ μέρος ἐξευρίσκειν δυναμένου τὸ μέσον.

οὕτω γοῦν καὶ πλάσται καὶ γραφεῖς ἀνδριαντοποιοί τε καὶ ὅλως ἀγαλματοποιοί τὰ κάλλιστα γράφουσι καὶ πλάττουσι καθ' ἕκαστον εἶδος, οἷον ἄνθρωπον εὐμορφότατον ἢ ἵππον ἢ βοῦν ἢ λέοντα τὸ μέσον ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ γένει σκοποῦντες. καὶ πού τις ἀνδρίας ἐπαινεῖται Πολυκλείτου κανῶν ὀνομαζόμενος, ἐκ τοῦ πάντων τῶν μορίων ἀκριβῆ τὴν πρὸς ἄλληλα συμμετρίαν ἔχειν ὀνόματος τοιοῦτου τυχών.<sup>131</sup>

<sup>131</sup> *training to easily determine in each separate species of living creature and in general the mean is not something for just anybody rather a man who is exceedingly assiduous can, also with long experience and much knowledge, of all things in their parts find the mean. thus also the moulders, painters, sculptors and, in short, all the producers of images, depict and mould the most beautiful in each kind <of art>: for instance, a well-formed man, horse, ox, or lion, by looking at the mean in each species. And there is somewhere a much appreciated statue by Polycleitus, called Canon it has that name because it possesses an exact proportion of all parts to each other.*

Finding τὸ μέσον is compared by Galen to the way artists work who produce images: in their search for the “most beautiful” they look at the species they want to depict in order to find the mean of that species. This must refer to a general mean in relations of size: the relative measures typical for each species. As before, the συμμετρία typical of each species is what is sought, as is evident from the specific example given by Galen: the Canon-statue of Polycleitus, described as having ἀκριβῆς συμμετρία “exact proportions”, is presented as a specific instance of artistic μέσον.

It is also interesting to note that finding the mean is said to be difficult: it requires a man who is willing to exert himself and who needs experience and theoretical knowledge. Here, as before, one meets the three fundamental requirements to master any technique: talent, knowledge and training.<sup>132</sup>

The artistic procedure just described acknowledges that the perfect proportion, which is aimed at in art, cannot be found in reality. It is the task of the artist, therefore, to observe reality and select beautiful elements from it, and then to create a beautiful work of art from these selections. This common wisdom<sup>133</sup> is already reflected in the 5th century BC, when Gorgias says in his *Helen* (18):

ἀλλὰ μὴν οἱ γραφεῖς ὅταν ἐκ πολλῶν χρωμάτων καὶ σωμάτων ἓν σῶμα καὶ σχῆμα τελείως ἀπεργάσωνται, τέρπουσι τὴν ὄψιν.<sup>134</sup>

The same procedure is discussed in the so-called Zeuxis anecdote in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (III,10,2):

καὶ μὴν τὰ γε καλὰ εἶδη ἀφομοιοῦντες, ἐπειδὴ οὐ ράδιον ἐνὶ ἀνθρώπῳ περιτυχεῖν ἅμεμπτα πάντα ἔχοντι, ἐκ πολλῶν συνάγοντες τὰ ἐξ ἐκάστου κάλλιστα οὕτως ὅλα τὰ σώματα καλὰ ποιεῖτε φαίνεσθαι.<sup>135</sup>

<sup>132</sup> See above, p. 35-36, 82 f.

<sup>133</sup> See Buchheim (1985), 424-425 on a possible relation of this Gorgianic text with Empedocles (fr. 31 B 23 DK).

<sup>134</sup> But when painters complete out of many colours and objects a single object and form, they please the sight. [tr. MacDowell].

<sup>135</sup> and imitating the beautiful forms - as it is not easy to find one man perfect in all respects - by bringing together the most beautiful parts from many you make the bodies as a whole seem beautiful.



As such, the procedure followed by these artists is mimetic: they imitate what is beautiful in nature and the combination of these separate elements is a new, beautiful work of art.<sup>136</sup>

Finally, to these fragments of Polycleitean theory can be added another text, which does not contain a quotation, but seems to provide a synoptic paraphrase of his thoughts and avails itself of a technical vocabulary, that may well have been used by Polycleitus himself.<sup>137</sup> The text is to be found in Plutarch (*Mor.* 45 c-d):

ὥς ἐν ἔργῳ γε παντὶ τὸ μὲν καλὸν ἐκ πολλῶν οἷον ἀριθμῶν εἰς ἓνα καιρὸν ἡκόντων ὑπὸ συμμετρίας τινὸς καὶ ἁρμονίας ἐπιτελεῖται, τὸ δ' αἰσχρὸν ἐξ ἑνὸς τοῦ τυχόντος ἐλλείποντος ἢ προσόντος ἀτόπως εὐθὺς ἐτοίμην ἔχει τὴν γένεσιν...<sup>138</sup>

Even though there is no direct reference to Polycleitus, it seems at least possible to include the text here. Plutarch is thinking of him as he comments on craftsmanship and the mechanics of productive activity. If something beautiful is to result from that activity, then the achievement of that result is dependent upon (ἐκ) a regularity of numbers or measures with regard to a certain "right measure" or relation (καιρός). This again is governed by the qualities of being proportioned and having an harmonious arrangement or framework. The ugly, by contrast, is caused either by the absence of some element required or its presence where not required. Thus craftsmanship involves many stages, in which the artist tries to add to his work where he should, in order to reach beauty, and in which he must beware of adding too much in order to avoid ugliness.

If compared to the texts quoted above, this passage from Plutarch contains at least a clear parallel, both in content and diction, to what can plausibly be seen as Polycleitus' thoughts on the aim of the art of statuary. This suggests that the key-words of the passage (τὸ καλόν, ἐκ πολλῶν ἀριθμῶν, καιρός, συμμετρία, ἁρμονία, ἐλλείποντος, προσόντος

<sup>136</sup> Grassi (1962), 76-78.

<sup>137</sup> Philipp (1990), 140 f

<sup>138</sup> *As in every work the beautiful is reached as a result of the fact that many numbers come together in one right measure by a certain kind of proportion and framework, and the ugly immediately originates as a result of one occasional element being absent or present where it is out of place.*

ἀτόπως) belong to theorizing on craftsmanship in general. It is, therefore, not necessary to argue that the passage in Plutarch reflects Polycleitean thought: rather, it seems that Polycleitus availed himself of the vocabulary of craftsmanship, as it is found in the fifth century BC.

On the basis of these texts some conclusions on the notion of *καίρος* in craftsmanship can be made:

- a) it is something to be aimed at;
- b) it is something strictly defined and confined, and therefore easily missed; achieving it depends on subtlety and fine tuning;
- c) the qualities of right proportion (measurable relations) and arrangement (fitting together) are conducive to its existence;
- d) it is something non-mechanical and must be aimed at anew in every separate work of art;
- e) its realisation depends on both theoretical insight and practical ability (experience) of the craftsman.

From a comparison of the technical terminologies and phrasings on *καίρος* in Isocrates on the one hand and the arts on the other, it can be concluded that they are essentially similar. This conclusion is justified since Isocrates, in theorizing on his activity as a writer of discourse, had the image of a finished discourse as a product of craftsmanship in mind. In this respect he seems to follow the traditional notion of the close relationship between poetry and the visual arts, one which can be traced back to Simonides and which was also very much present in Plato. Central to this notion is that both poetry and the visual arts are branches of σοφία, and that they therefore share a common purpose and technique.<sup>139</sup>

More specifically, Isocrates follows in Pindar's footsteps in using the technique of transitional passages, marking the boundaries between parts of the song/discourse, for reflections on the technique of a maker of discourse. While Pindar's aim in these passages was to present his song as a performance in progress, it seems that Isocrates used these same passages with a didactic purpose. His works were used as paradigmatic specimens of discourse in his educational system<sup>140</sup>, and they provide both examples and theoretical reflection at the same time. The didactic

<sup>139</sup> On the notion in general see Bowra (1973), 166-187.

<sup>140</sup> See Ch. I, § 3.

effectiveness of the vocabulary of craftsmanship might have been enhanced by the fact that reflection on the arts seems to have been very common among the intellectuals of Isocrates time.

## IV. KAINOS

In this chapter the concept of “newness” or “novelty” (καινότης and καινός) will receive explicit attention.<sup>1</sup> Isocrates’ thoughts about this concept were probably influenced by the sophists and their contributions to Greek literary practice and theory.<sup>2</sup> However, he does not follow in their foot-steps but offers a view on literary novelty in keeping with his own general rhetorical doctrine. Isocrates’ thoughts on “newness” will be discussed in the general context of Greek literary theory up to his time.

## 1. Homer, Pindar, Aristophanes.

When in the palace at Ithaca the bard Phemius performs a song on the sorrowful return of the Greeks from Troy, he causes Penelope to weep. She cannot stand listening to this song because she is painfully reminded of her situation and the absence of Odysseus. She therefore asks Phemius to discontinue his song, and to choose another subject:

Φήμιε, πολλὰ γὰρ ἄλλα βροτῶν θελκτῆρια οἶδας,  
ἔργ’ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε, τά τε κλείουσιν αἰοδοί,  
τῶν ἔν γέ σφιν ἄειδε παρήμενος, ...  
..., ταύτης δ’ ἀποπαύε’ αἰοδῆς  
λυγρῆς, ...<sup>3</sup>

Telemachus then defends the singer and says that he is not to blame for the effect of his song but Zeus, the one responsible for the fate of men. Although the songs on the returns of the Greek heroes are full of sorrow, the public wants to hear them. Of songs like these Telemachus says:

τὴν γὰρ αἰοδὴν μᾶλλον ἐπικλείουσ’ ἄνθρωποι,  
ἢ τις ἀκούοντεςσι νεωτάτη ἀμφιπέληται.<sup>4</sup>

Here we have an early example of literary criticism, albeit in the form of self-conscious reflection, concerned with novelty (νεωτάτη). Apparently it is the charm of the latest performance, which is evidence

<sup>1</sup> On this concept see IV, 8, XIII, 13, Wersdorfer (1940), 36-42, Mikkola (1954), 29, Hudson-Williams (1948), 77

<sup>2</sup> See Verdenius (1983), 22-23 with relevant bibliography

<sup>3</sup> Hom 1, 337-41 *Phemius, do you not know many other charmed songs for people's ears? Songs in which poets have extolled the great deeds of gods or men? Sing one of those, here from your place [..], but this lamentable tale give over* (transl. T E Lawrence)

<sup>4</sup> Hom 1, 351-2 *A crowd ever extols the song which sounds freshest in its ears* (transl. T E Lawrence)

of the singer's art, that makes the song so popular. The subject is not original in the sense that it is unknown: the public is aware of the home-coming stories (*nostoi*) of the Greeks. The novelty here seems to refer to content rather than (poetic) form: the singer's performing techniques, like his playing the *kithara* and using the epic format, are a matter of course. Obviously it is the way he presents the song's story which is the criterion<sup>5</sup>. The boundary line between content and form, however, cannot be drawn with certainty. If the audience knows the story, they know the song's content. They are mainly interested in the way that story is presented: therefore both content and form (presentation) are at issue.<sup>6</sup> Two relevant points can be made here:

(1) Penelope says of the home-coming song that it is just one of those which Phemius could sing: he knows many other songs, as he belongs to the profession of singers who extol (κλείουσιν) the deeds of gods and men in their song; the singer can perform a song on request, which means that the audience is acquainted with the content of the song;

(2) it is the realisation of these songs that appeals to the audience: the singer's subjects are traditional and well-known, but the audience is anxious to see in what way the story will be told to them.

The appreciation of the song's novelty is thus related to the familiarity and realisation of its content.

A similar observation can be made about another singer in the *Odyssey* known by name: Demodocus, in the palace at Scheria. At the end of the meal he is inspired by the Muse and starts his song:

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πόσιος καὶ ἐδητύος ἐξ ἔρον ἔντο,  
 Μοῦσ' ἄρ' αἰδὼν ἀνῆκεν αἰειδέμεναι  
 οἴμης, τῆς τότ' ἄρα κλέος οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἵκανε,  
 νεῖκος Ὀδυσσῆος καὶ Πηλεΐδew Ἀχιλλῆος,<sup>7</sup>

The singer commences his performance by singing about the feud of Odysseus and Achilles. This song or lay apparently belongs to a cycle of

<sup>5</sup> See S. Goldhill (1991), C. Segal (1992), 3-29, esp. 14-17; A. Ford (1992), 8-9, 32-34, 68-70, 129-130, Zs. Rutook (1989), 331-348.

<sup>6</sup> See Ford (1992), 33, who warns against anachronism in the clear distinction between form and content. They are best seen as complementary.

<sup>7</sup> 8,72-5: '...until they had satisfied their lust for drink and meat. Then the Muse pricked the musician on to sing of the great deeds of heroes, as they were recounted in verses whose fame had already filled the skies: telling of the feud between Odysseus and Achilles the son of Peleus (vert. T.E. Lawrence).

songs, referred to with οἴμη<sup>8</sup> on the "great deeds of heroes", the κλέα ἀνδρῶν (cf. IX, 185-191). As can be seen from line 74, these songs are well known. Later on, Demodocus is praised by Odysseus for his skill as a singer: "you have sung very well on the doom of the Greeks" (489: λίην γὰρ κατὰ κόσμον Ἀχαιῶν οἶτον αἰδεῖς). Then Odysseus asks him to change the subject and sing another song from the same collection, the story of the construction of the Wooden Horse:

ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ μετὰβηθι καὶ ἵππου κόσμον αἰεῖσον  
 δουρατέου, τὸν Ἑπειδὸς ἐποίησεν σὺν Ἀθῆνῃ<sup>9</sup>.

Here we see the aspect of familiarity of the audience with the themes of the songs performed by the singer confirmed. Like Phemius on Ithaca, Demodocus is requested to sing on a well-known theme. He is to change from the song on the Feud of Odysseus and Achilles (75 f.) to the one on the Wooden Horse. This story Demodocus picks up from the point where the Greeks embarked on their ships and leave the camp, and the Wooden Horse is standing on the beach (500: ἔνθεν ἐλῶν<sup>10</sup>): he can do so because the elements of the story were already familiar.<sup>11</sup>

If the content of the song is already known and if its performance is of paramount importance, what does the quality of "newness" actually refer to? It should be remembered that the Homeric poems are to a very large extent the product of an oral culture. This means that one should realize that concepts like originality and novelty are to be evaluated in the specific terms of that culture and not anachronistically to be compared to modern technical distinctions like form and content<sup>12</sup>. In this case it is relevant to note that the activity of the singer was not defined in terms of his individual performance, but seen as the result of

<sup>8</sup> On οἴμη as "cycle of songs" see J B Hainsworth, *Odysseia Vol II (Libri V-VIII)*, 1982, *ad loc*; cf 8,479-81

πᾶσι γὰρ ἀνθρώποισιν ἐπιχθονίοισιν αἰδοῖ  
 τιμῆς ἔμποροι εἰσι καὶ αἰδοῦς, οὐνεκ' ἄρα σφέας  
 οἴμας μοῦσ' ἐδίδαξε, φύλισε δὲ φύλον αἰοιδῶν.

*For it is right that bards should receive honour and reverence from every man alive, inasmuch as the Muse cherishes the whole guild of singers and teaches each one his rules of song* (tr. T.E. Lawrence)

<sup>9</sup> 8, 492-3: *But now change your theme and sing of how Epeius with the help of Athene carpented together that great timber horse* (tr. T.E. Lawrence)

<sup>10</sup> Cf. 1,10 τῶν ἀμύθεν γε εἶπε ,

<sup>11</sup> " das Anfangen an einem bestimmten Punkte des Gesanges, welcher oft gehört und nach seinem Zusammenhange bekannt war ", K F Ameis - C Hentze, *Homers Odyssee*, Leipzig 1889, *ad loc*; see Notopoulos (1949), 18-19 on the influence of the audience on the singer's performance

<sup>12</sup> Ford (1992), 33.

two complementary elements: the skill of the singer himself and the inspiration provided by the Muses. These elements do not exclude one another, but are operational at the same time. The singer Demodocus is described thus:

Δημόδοκον· τῷ γάρ ῥα θεὸς πέρι δῶκεν ἀοιδὴν

τέρπειν, δπηθ' ὅς μιν ἐποτρύνῃσιν ἀείδειν.<sup>13</sup>

Ἄνδ' ἡ σὺν γερ Πηλεΐδῃ σάθῃσιν ὅς μιν ἡμῶν

ἀντιδιδάκτος δ' εἰμί, θεὸς δέ μοι ἐν φρεσὶν οἴμας

παντοίας ἐνέφυσεν<sup>14</sup>

These examples of Homeric implicit poetics allow a more specific delineation of what is meant by νεωτάτη. Any modern interpretation of “newness” in the sense of “originality” can be ruled out. Rather one should look at the singer’s task of preservation: with his song he preserves the past and the names of those who lived in the past. When he sings of the glorious deeds of heroes, he brings back to life these deeds for his audience and, in a way, visualizes them. The vividness of his song accounts for its strong emotional effect on the audience<sup>15</sup>. Thus it seems that in a context of oral poetry the quality of “newness” can be explained in terms of “presentness” or vividness.

Pindar occasionally reflects on the requirements of his songs, and in *Nemean* VIII, 19-22 he considers the difficulties involved with laudatory poetry on contemporaries. He would like to praise Deinos and his father Megakles, but he hesitates to do so:

ἵσταμαι δὴ ποσσὶ κούφοις, ἀμπνέων τε πρὶν τι φάμεν.

πολλὰ γὰρ πολλὰ λέλεκται, νεαρὰ δ' ἔξεν-

ρόντα δόμεν βασάνῳ

ἐς ἔλεγχον, ἅπας κίνδυνος· ὅσων δὲ λόγοι φθονεροῖσιν,

ἄπτεται δ' ἐσλὼν ἀεὶ, χειρόνεσσι δ' οὐκ ἐρίζει.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> 8, 44-45: Demodocus, to whom the god has given the gift of song in order to charm, whichever way his heart moves him to sing

<sup>14</sup> 22, 347-8: self-taught I am, and the god has planted all kinds of song in me

<sup>15</sup> For the emotional effect of vividness (*enargeia*) see Quint *IO* III,2,32, see, e.g., Odysseus' tears when listening to Demodocus' song on the Trojan War at 8, 73-92, or on the Wooden Horse at 8, 486-531; Penelope's bursting into tears when hearing Phemios' song on the return of the Greek heroes at 1, 325-44, except sadness, the singer will predominantly produce pleasure (τέρψις) 1, 340-55; 4, 183-95; 8, 536-43, etc.; see Segal (1992), 22.

<sup>16</sup> I stand on light feet now, catching breath before I speak. For there are songs in every style, but to put a new one to the touchstone for testing is all danger. Words are a morsel to the envious, and their envy always fastens on the noble, but leaves the base alone (tr. F J Nisetich, 1980)

In Pindar's expression of hesitation one can recognize the "Hindernismotiv", a technique by which the poet can assert himself: despite the difficulties he will proceed with his song.<sup>17</sup> In the lines 20-21 Pindar distinguishes between two categories of poetic themes: first there are many themes which have been treated this way and that, and secondly there are "new things" (νεαρά) which are "found" (ἐξευρόντα) and put to the test.<sup>18</sup>

In the first category Pindar deals with his literary themes in terms of the opposition between old and new. Elsewhere he says that it is the poet who conserves the past by choosing it as subject for his song<sup>19</sup>:

ἀλλὰ παλαιὰ γάρ  
εὔδει χάρις, ἀμνάμονες δὲ βροτοί,  
ὅ τι μὴ σοφίας ἄωτον ἄκρον  
κλυταῖς ἐπέων ῥοαῖσιν ἐξίκηται ζυγόν<sup>20</sup>

Remembrance of former grace (παλαιὰ χάρις) depends on the poet's decision to include it in his song.<sup>21</sup> In the 8th Pythian Ode the question of inclusion of the glorious past of Aegina is made explicit. In his praise Pindar mentions the Graces favouring the island's "just city" and its renown because of the connection with the Aiacids. Its glory remains perfect, and many praise its heroes and their accomplishments in song (25: πολλοῖσι...αἰδέεται). But then Pindar breaks off this laudatory section:

εἰμὶ δὲ ἄσυχλος ἀναθέμεν  
πᾶσαν μακραγορίαν  
λύρα τε καὶ φθέγματι μαλθακῶ,  
μὴ κόρος ἐλθὼν κνίσῃ. τὸ δ' ἐν ποσὶ μοι τράχον  
ἵτω τεὸν χρέος, ὦ παῖ, νεώτατον καλῶν,

<sup>17</sup> Cf. O. II,94 f., N. III,80 f., on the Hindernismotiv see H. Gundert (1978), 98 f.; cf. also Solon fr. 26-27 GP (against Mimermus), fr. 7, 1-2, 5-6 GP.

<sup>18</sup> See A.M. Miller (1982), 111-120.

<sup>19</sup> In an oral culture the past is predominantly preserved by putting it in verse: see Thomas (1992), 114 " . . . if something was worth remembering and passing on, it would be better remembered if it was in verse "

<sup>20</sup> I. VII,16-19 *But the grace of old drops to sleep, and mortal men forget whatever has not intermingled in the glorious streams of verses, and come to flower through a poet's skill* (tr. F.J. Nisetich), Bowra's translation (1985) retains the image of the song as chariot: *But ancient beauty slumbers, and men forget whatever has not been yoked to echoing streams of songs to come to the utmost peak of art*

<sup>21</sup> See also N. VII,12-13: *ταῖς μεγάλαις γὰρ ἀλκαῖς | σκότον πολὺν ὕμνων ἔχοντι δεόμεναι* (For great deeds of strength, if they lack songs, are sunk in deep obscurity, tr. F.J. Nisetich).



ἐμᾷ ποτανὸν ἀμφὶ μαχανᾷ.<sup>22</sup>

The ancient stories on Aegina are put aside by the poet, and he changes his subject to the present: Aristomenes' latest victory (νεώτατον καλῶν) will be the next theme of the song. Thus one can see that (events of) the past as potential subject-matter can be referred to by the poet with παλαιός<sup>23</sup>, and that it is contrasted with (events of) the present, referred to with νέος or νεαρός. It appears that newness does not imply something hitherto unknown, but rather the poetic realisation of something already known. This presentation should make an impression of newness: in that way the poet can be original. This is clearly expressed in the 9th Olympian:

αἶνει δὲ παλαιὸν μὲν οἶνον, ἄνθεα δ' ὕμνων  
νεωτέρων.<sup>24</sup>

Thus "old" in the sense of "well-known" and "new" in the sense of "recent, fresh" appear to function as characteristics of literary subject-matter. The presentation of new and memorable information is, in this genre, expected of the poet, the "messenger of victory".<sup>25</sup>

The second thematic category concerns finding a new subject-matter and its reception. As can be seen above, the poet is aware that finding a new theme and presenting it for the audience's judgment involves taking a risk. Here we have a technical aspect of the poetic craft: new material can be "found", the verb used being (ἐξ)ευρίσκειν.<sup>26</sup> In a poetical context the verb occurs in the 3rd Olympian, where Pindar introduces his victory-song on Theron of Akragas as follows:

...Μοῖσα δ' οὕτω ποι παρέ-  
στα μοι νεοσίγαλον εὐρόντι τρόπον<sup>27</sup>

<sup>22</sup> P. VIII,29-34: *But I am without leisure to set the whole story down in melody and lyrics. Tedium would surely come and chafe my audience. But here is something hastening to meet me. I am indebted to you for it, my child - the latest of your victories: now watch it fly upon the wings of my devising* [tr. F.J. Nisetich]; On the "Abbruchsformel" see Race (1990), 41-57 and Van der Weiden (1991), 92-93.

<sup>23</sup> In N. VIII,51-52 *πάλαι* is used to refer to the traditionality of laudatory song: *ἦν γε μὴν ἐπικώμιος ὕμνος ἰδὴ παλαι* (the songs of praise also existed long ago, tr. F.J. Nisetich)

<sup>24</sup> O. IX,47-48: *But we praise wine for its age, and songs for the fresh bloom upon them* [tr. F.J. Nisetich]; cf. I. V,63: *νέων...ὑμνων*.

<sup>25</sup> Crotty (1982), 82-83 with n. 26.

<sup>26</sup> Van Groningen (1960), 17.

<sup>27</sup> O. III,4: *For so the Muse stood at my side when I discovered this new mode of song* [tr. Nisetich]; similarly O. I,110: *εὐρὼν ὁδὸν λόγων*, O. IX,80-1: *εἶην εὐρεσιπέτης ἀναγείσθαι ἰ πρόσφορος ἐν Μοισᾷ δῖφρω*; P. I,60: *ἄγ' ἔπειτ'...φίλιον ἐξεύρωμεν ὕμνον*, fr. 122,14; in N. VI,53-4 Pindar refers to the finding of subject-matter by predecessors: *καὶ ταῦτα μὲν παλαιότεροι ὁδὸν ἀμαξίτων εὐρον*; Cf. also Bacchylides fr. 5; on (ἐξ)ευρίσκειν in non-poetical contexts see

Inspired by the Muse, the poet has "found" his new song. Mention of the Muse's role as source for inspiration puts the poetical character of this passage beyond doubt.<sup>28</sup> The poet's task is thus to compose his song, and this task is referred to by εὐρίσκειν, that does not consist in an *creatio ex nihilo* but that involves the collection of material already available. As Pindar often presents his song as being performed on the spot<sup>29</sup>, one can include here a passage in the 4th *Pythian*, where he explicitly mentions an aspect of his technique: he interrupts his narrative on the Golden Fleece and says:

μακρὰ μοι νεῖσθαι κατ' ἀμαξίτον· ὦρα  
γὰρ συνάπτει καὶ τινα  
οἶμον ἴσαμι βραχύν· πολ-  
λοῖσι δ' ἄγῃμαι σοφίας ἑτέροις<sup>30</sup>

Here the process of poetic finding or invention is not defined by the technical term εὐρίσκειν, but one can see it presented in practice. The element of selection and conscious decision to exclude material, which is relevant and potentially useful, has an important part in the process of composition.

An important implication of the inclusion of new contemporary subjects like the praise of a victor, lies in the possible negative reaction of the audience. As can be seen in *Nemean VIII*,22 (see above), the audience might react to the praise of a contemporary with jealousy (φθόνος). This is a well-known topic in encomiastic literature: jealousy is part of human nature, and therefore achievements by contemporaries may be badly received. This state of affairs is acknowledged by Thucydides, who has Pericles say in the Funeral Oration: φθόνος γὰρ τοῖς ζῶσι πρὸς τὸ ἀντίπαλον.<sup>31</sup> Hence, the poet should proceed tactfully and carefully in dealing with these themes.

Bundy (1986), 58 n 53, on εὐρεσις as "literary invention" in poetical contexts see Waszink (1978) and Verdenius (1983), 54-55

<sup>28</sup> See Verdenius (1983), 41-43, esp n 129

<sup>29</sup> Crotty (1982), 8 "Some odes present the poet in the act of composing the ode"; see also J. Herington, *Poetry into Drama. Early Tragedy and the Greek Poetic Tradition*, Berkeley, Los Angeles & London 1985, 26 f

<sup>30</sup> P. IV,247-249 *But it's a long way by the main road, and time presses I know a certain shortcut, for I am gude to many in the turns of song* [tr Nisetich]

<sup>31</sup> Th. II,45,1 *the living feel envy towards a rival*, cf Gorgias, *Palamedes* 28 εἰπεῖν ἐπὶ φθόνον μὲν ἀληθές δὲ, see also Aristotle, *Rh.* II,10,5 (1388 a 7 8) τοῖς γὰρ ἐγγύς καὶ τόπῳ καὶ ἡλικίᾳ καὶ δόξῃ φθονοῦσιν (*we envy those who are near us in time, place, age, or reputation*, tr Rhys Roberts-Barnes)

In Pindar the newness of subject-matter is relevant, but in a way different from Homer. It is present in passages where he states explicitly some of the rules of his genre. Themes should be "new" in the sense that they are either a fresh realisation of traditional material or consist of contemporary events like a victory in an athletic contest. In the latter case, the poet should beware of envious feelings on the part of the audience.

In terms of literary theory, "newness" can be used with reference to a work's freshness rather than to its quality of being in an early stage of development, i.e. being "young". This distinction is reflected in the Greek idiom of the classical period. The latter quality is referred to with the adjective νεός, while the former is expressed by καινός. This indicates that καινός has taken over that particular semantic scope formerly belonging to νεός.

The adjective καινός and its cognates are used of objects rather than persons, and it qualifies an object as "new" in the sense that this object in contrast to other objects provides the senses with an impression of freshness.<sup>32</sup> It is this quality that has a special appeal to the intellect and provokes interest, because it suggests inventiveness. This usage seems to be derived from καινοτομεῖν, a term used in mining "to cut fresh into stone, to open a new vein". Thus the verb is found in Xenophon (*Vect.* IV,27), and it seems plausible to assume that this occurrence reflects an older usage. Metaphorically, in the sense of "introducing novelties", the verb is first used by Aristophanes (*Vesp.* 876 (Bdelykleon praying to Apollo) δέξαι τελετήν καινήν, ᾧναξ, ἦν τῷ πατρὶ καινοτομοῦμεν.<sup>33</sup>

The metaphor will probably have been easily accepted, because the mining activity at Laureion was important to Athens.<sup>34</sup>

An early instance of καινός in the special sense of "literary freshness"<sup>35</sup> seems to be in Euripides *Troades* 512, the opening verses of a choral song

ἀμφὶ μοι Ἴλιον, ᾧ

<sup>32</sup> For this distinction see Schmidt (1878), Bd. II, 115 f. (s.v. νεός, 47-17), Chantraine (1968), 479.

<sup>33</sup> *Accept the new rite, O Lord, we institute afresh for the father.*

<sup>34</sup> Cf. *Anst. Eccl.* 584 and 586, see Müller (1974), 122-123.

<sup>35</sup> For older instances of καινός as "new" in the general sense see e.g. *A. Cho.* 659, *Eum.* 406.

Μοῦσα, καινῶν ὕμνων  
 ἄεισον ἐν δακρύοις ὥδ' ἀν' ἐπικήδειον.<sup>36</sup>

Here καινός refers to the song the chorus will sing: it is different from previous songs and it will contain a new version of the fall of Troy compared to the well-known epic treatment.<sup>37</sup>

Of special interest is Herodotus IX,26,1, where the debate between the Tegeans and the Athenians on their respective positions in the battle array is represented. Both parties consider themselves to be right, and argue their point in a speech, in which they καὶ καινὰ καὶ παλαιὰ παραφέροντες "bring to bear (deeds) from recent times and from the past". Both speeches in their catalogues of exploits make use of mythology and elements from encomiastic discourse. This feature connects them to the early practice of epideictic rhetoric, esp. the *epitaphios logos*.<sup>38</sup> The explicit disposition of the speeches according to καινὰ ἀνδ' παλαιὰ suggests that this was a scheme utilized in this genre of speech making.<sup>39</sup> This, again, strongly suggests that καινός had importance in early rhetoric.

Further illustration can be found in Aristophanes' *Clouds*, in the debate between Better Argument and Worse Argument:

B.A. ἀπολείς σύ ; τίς ὢν;  
 W.A. λόγος.  
 B.A. ἦττων γ' ὢν.  
 W.A. ἀλλὰ σε νικῶ τὸν ἐμοῦ κρείττω  
 φάσκοντ' εἶναι.  
 B.A. τί σοφὸν ποιῶν;  
 W.A. γνώμας καινὰς ἐξευρίσκων.  
 B.A. ταῦτα γὰρ ἀνθεὶ διὰ τούτουσί  
 τοὺς ἀνόητους.  
 W.A. οὔκ, ἀλλὰ σοφοῦς.<sup>40</sup>

And similarly elsewhere in the same comedy:

καὶ τ' ἐκ τούτων ὢν ἂν λέξῃ

<sup>36</sup> On *Ilion o Muse, chant to me the funereal song, a new hymn, ful of tears*

<sup>37</sup> See Lee (1968), 164 *ad loc*

<sup>38</sup> See Loraux (1986), 65

<sup>39</sup> See Rademacher (1954), 301-302, How / Wells, II (1928), 296-7

<sup>40</sup> Ar.Nu. 893-6 *You destroy me? Who do you think you are? - An argument - Yes, but an inferior one - Yes, but I'll defeat you who vaunt yourself better than me - Oh, and what'll you do that's so clever? - Devise a new set of principles - Yes, that's all the rage now, thanks to these fools [indicating the audience] - Not fools, but intelligent people.* [tr. Sommerstein, 1982].

ῥηματίοισιν καινοῖς αὐτόν  
καὶ διανοίαις κατατοξεύσω.<sup>41</sup>

The background to this usage is the new education, introduced by the sophists. In general, this can be seen in the arguments brought forth from both sides. Better Argument, who represents the dominant way of life, based on traditional beliefs, focuses on respect for tradition in music and poetry, acceptance of mythology and respect for the elder generation.<sup>42</sup> Conversely, Weaker Argument represents innovation and argues for a challenge to tradition and poetry by rational argument, and to mythology by agnosticism and cynicism, and for moral nihilism.<sup>43</sup> It is made clear that followers of this kind of learning are sophists (1111; 1308-9), whose primary skill is persuasive speaking (239; 260f.; 1077). According to Better Argument the Athenians are led on by the sophists and their new way of thinking.<sup>44</sup> As is well known, the sophists introduced a unconventional spirit in understanding the principles of general behaviour. They questioned traditional morality and its way of life. Their instruction provoked reaction: conservatives felt that their influence was detrimental and they considered it necessary to speak out against relativism and a mental attitude to which they were not accustomed. The passages quoted illustrate that the confrontation between these two attitudes was indeed an issue at the time: they indicate both the intellectual aspect (ἐξευρίσκων) and the provocation of interest (the apparent interest the Athenians take in these novelties) as elements of the discussion. The sophists' newness has an element of the unexpected, which could be called its "shock-value", as emerges clearly

<sup>41</sup> Ar Nu 942-4. And then, on the basis of what he says I'll shoot him down with deft new phrases and ideas [tr Sommerstein, 1982]

<sup>42</sup> Ar Nu 964f, 902f, 963, 981f, 993

<sup>43</sup> Ar Nu 317f, 942f, 1003, 1058, 1109, 1048f, 1080f., 1470f, 1506-9, 1020f, 1039f., 1061.

<sup>44</sup> See Schiappa (1991), 110-112, Dover (1968), Ivii-lxvi, cf Gorgias *Palamedes* 26 βουλοίμην δ' ἂν παρὰ σοῦ πυθέσθαι, κότερον τοὺς σοφοὺς ἄνδρας νομίζεις ἀνοήτους ἢ φρονίμους εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἀνοήτους, καινός ὁ λόγος, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀληθής (reading, with Sauppe, καινός for κενός mss.), where καινός seems to appear in a context of intellectual activity Cf also *Dialexeis* 6.1. λέγεται δὲ τις λόγος οὐτ' ἀλαθής οὐτε καινός (ζηρε σθηρ μσο ρεαδ κενός), these passages may be relevant to the textual problem in Eur *Hec.* 824 καὶ μὴν - ἴσως μὲν τοῦ λόγου κενόν τότε, ἢ Κύπριν προβάλλειν ἀλλ' ὅμως εἰρήσεται, where Solmsen (1975), 57 suggests to read καινόν for κενόν "designated as strange or new because it is *unusual and daring* to remind Agamemnon that Cassandra is now his mistress and that this ought to create a relationship of χάρις between Hecuba and himself" (my italics) it seems to me that this conjecture is supported by the texts quoted above, on the error in transmission, consisting of a confusion of ai and e, due to change in pronunciation, see F W Hall, *A Companion to Classical Texts*, Chicago 1970 (= 1913), 184.

from another passage in Aristophanes: καίνον γ' "that's something new for you".<sup>45</sup>

The relevance of the sophists and their ideas emerges clearly from another instance in Aristophanes. In the *Frogs* he has Aeschylus and Euripides confront each other on the question of what constitutes good tragedy, and in this confrontation sophistic views on literature has an important place.<sup>46</sup> During this *agon* the chorus comments:

μέγα τὸ πρᾶγμα, πολὺ τὸ νείκος, ἄδρὸς ὁ πόλεμος ἔρχεται,  
χαλεπὸν οὖν ἔργον διαίρειν,  
ὅταν ὁ μὲν τεῖνῃ βιαίως,  
ὁ δ' ἐπαναστρέφειν δύνῃται κάπερείδεσθαι τορῶς.  
ἀλλὰ μὴ 'ν ταύτῳ κᾶθησθον·  
εἰσβολαὶ γάρ εἰσι πολλαὶ χᾶτεραι σοφισμάτων.  
ὅ τι περ οὖν ἔχετον ἐρίζειν,  
λέγετον, ἔπιτον, ἀνὰ (δὲ) φέρετον  
τὰ τε παλαιὰ καὶ τὰ καινὰ,  
κάποκινδυνεύετον λεπτὸν τι καὶ σοφὸν λέγειν.  
εἰ δὲ τοῦτο καταφοβεῖσθον, μὴ τις ἀμαθία προσῇ  
τοῖς θεωμένοισιν, ὥς τὰ  
λεπτὰ μὴ γνῶναι λεγόντοιν,  
μηδὲν ὀρρωδεῖτε τοῦθ'· ὥς οὐκεθ' οὕτω ταῦτ' ἔχει.  
ἐστρατευμένοι γὰρ εἰσι,  
βιβλίον τ' ἔχων ἕκαστος μανθάνει τὰ δεξιὰ·  
αἱ φύσεις τ' ἄλλως κράτισται,  
νῦν δὲ καὶ παρηκόνηται.  
μηδὲν οὖν δεῖσθον, ἀλλὰ  
πάντ' ἐπέξιστον, θεατῶν γ' οὐνεχ', ὥς ὄντων σοφῶν.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Ar *Ecc* 926-7, cf also Nu 547, V 1044, cf Ussher (1973), 204-5, *ad loc* "a surprise, a remark you weren't expecting", cf Hipp *Int* 17 ταῦτα ἦν ποιήη καὶ μὴ τάχιστα ὑγιαίνη, οὐ καίνον ἡ νοῦσος γὰρ ὡς χαλεπή (If you do this and the patient does not recover quickly, this is nothing new for this disease is a difficult one)

<sup>46</sup> See Sicking (1962), 42 f., 91 f., Pfeiffer (1968), 46-47 allows with hesitation for some sophistic influence in the Aeschylus/Euripides-debate, the question is carefully scrutinized by O'Sullivan (1992), *passim* (but see esp 7-22, 106-150), who argues convincingly for the presence of much terminological material on matters of stylistic theory derived from the sophists

<sup>47</sup> Ar *Ra*. 1099-1118 *serious the issue, important the debate, solid the fight that is going on. Difficult is making a decision, when one attacks forcefully and the other is able to reply and resist cleverly. But you two shouldn't keep always to the same ground there are many other ways of smart attack. All you have for the debate, say it, use it, bring it up, whether it be old or new, and risk to say something subtle and skilful. And if you fear that the audience is too stupid to appreciate the subtleties while you are speaking, never mind that is no longer the case. They are well-trained, and each has his book and understands the witty points. Their nature, which is well*

This chorus song, which may be taken to reflect the opinions of the poet himself<sup>48</sup>, is clearly concerned with sophistical ideas and techniques as they come forward in a debate.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, it suggests that the audience was acquainted with these techniques, because they have had training. Here a connection is made between teaching by the sophists and learning from books, a phenomenon of which Aristophanes apparently disapproves. The relevant point here is that using "the old and the new" (τὰ τε παλαιὰ καὶ τὰ καινὰ) as part of the debating technique belongs to the methods advocated by the sophists (εἰσβολαῖ... σοφισμάτων).

## 2. Thucydides, the sophists.

The evidence in Aristophanes' plays suggests that the issue of "newness" is closely linked to the sophists and their influence. It should be remembered that they often presented their ideas in the form of speeches: as can be inferred from the example of Gorgias, these were composed as a demonstration in practice of the concepts their author held.<sup>50</sup> They were not only intended to present these concepts as such, but they were at the same time examples of new methods in literary composition and thinking in general. Gorgias' *Helen* is a case in point: looking at its content, one can see how he introduces a more rational approach to myth by arguing a defense of Helen, whose guilt had been a subject in literature since Homer. In the construction of Helen's defense, he applies considerations from outside the original mythological framework. Not only does he refer to the part played by the gods or the all governing force of Fate, he also takes the possible influence of the spoken word and the power of love into consideration. Furthermore, on the level of formal argumentation one can see the application of more or less systematical methods of thinking, as they were developed by the

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*endowed anyway, has been sharpened now. So have no fear, but attack all, certainly because of the audience, they being skilled people* [translation based on the text and commentary of Stanford (21963)], see also Denniston (1927), 113-121, Dover (1993), 329-331

<sup>48</sup> See Dover (1993), 329, Radermacher (1954), 299-300, Sicking (1962), 94

<sup>49</sup> See Dover (1993), 10-24, Radermacher (1954), 300-304; cf. the craze for debate and reasoning in *Eg.* 1375 f., the wish to be δύνατος λέγειν in *Eg.* 346, for the 4th century see *Isoc.* XV, 244 f.

<sup>50</sup> On sophistic speeches as demonstrations see Gorgias, frs. 6, 17-19 DK, *Arist. Soph. El.* 33, 183 b 36 - 184 a 8; cf. Cole (1991), 75-78, Kennedy (1994), 18-19, an explicit reference to a model-speech can be found in *Isoc.* XI, 48 in writing his defense of the despot Busiris Polycrates wanted παράδειγμα καταλιπεῖν ὥς χρή περὶ τῶν αἰσχροῦν αἰτιῶν καὶ δυσχερῶν πραγμάτων ποιῆσθαι τὰς ἀπολογίας, see also Pernot (1993), I, 19 f, Ch. I, § 3

sophists. To these belong, e.g., the argument from probability and, more generally, the principle of arguing both sides of a question (*in utramque partem disputare*).<sup>51</sup> It is with innovations like these that the sophists made their mark and were able to enhance the effectiveness of their speeches. Confirmation of this point may be found in Thucydides, who has Cleon say to the Athenians in the Mytilene-debate:

μετὰ καινότητος μὲν λόγου ἀπατάσθαι ἄριστοι, μετὰ δεδοκιμασμένον δ' μὴ ξυνέπεσθαι ἐθέλιν, δοῦλοι ὄντες τῶν αἰεὶ ἀτόπων, ὑπερόπται δὲ τῶν εἰωθότων.<sup>52</sup>

In what follows, Cleon articulates what he sees as the bent for rhetorical display on the part of the Athenians. According to him, they wish to be orators themselves or, failing that, to create the impression of being on an intellectual par with orators: they applaud a sharp remark before it is fully expressed or anticipate what will be said. They are slow, however, to understand the consequences of these utterances and are insufficiently concentrated on the matters really at hand (III,38,6). Cleon's conclusion is:

ἀπλῶς τε ἀκοῇς ἡδονῇ ἡσώμενοι καὶ σοφιστῶν θεαταῖς ἐοικότες μᾶλλον ἢ περὶ πόλεως βουλευομένοις.<sup>53</sup>

The display of rhetorical art appears to impress the audience: they applaud these techniques, of which *kainōthw* is one. As one can infer from the phrase *μετὰ καινότητος...εἰωθότων*, the newness is characterised by τὰ ἄτοπα: "what is out of place", "strange", or "paradoxical".<sup>54</sup> The paradoxical here can be further defined as "contrary to expectation": it is

<sup>51</sup> See Solmsen (1975), 20 f.; cf. Eur. *Antiope* fr. 29: ἐκ παντὸς ἂν τις πράγματος δισῶν λόγων ἰάγων θεῖτ' ἂν, εἰ λέγειν εἴη σοφός.

<sup>52</sup> Th. III,38,5 *you are easily taken in by the newness of an argument and are unwilling to conform to what is proven to be just, slaves as you are to what is always abnormal and disdainers of what is ordinary*; on this particular aspect of the Athenian state of mind see also I,70,2 (the Corinthians speaking to the Spartans) οἱ μὲν γε νεωτεροποιοὶ καὶ ἐπινοῆσαι ὀρεῖς καὶ ἐπιτελέσαι ἔργα ἃ ἂν γνῶσιν· ὑμεῖς δὲ τὰ ὑπάρχοντά τε σφῆζειν καὶ ἐπιγνῶναι μὴδὲν καὶ ἔργα οὐδὲ τὰναγκαῖα ἐξικέσθαι (*they [sc. the Athenians] are innovators, quick in taking their decisions and in putting into effect what they planned, you are inclined to conserve what exists, to think of nothing new and when action is called for not even to fulfill what is necessary*, on the verb ἀπατάσθαι and the background of Gorgias' concept of the deceptive power of speech (ἀπατή: see Helen, 8, 11) see Verdenius (1981), 116-128, esp. 116-7.

<sup>53</sup> Th. III,38,7: *In a word, fallen victim to the pleasure of listening [sc. to speeches], you resemble more a theatre-audience at the feet of sophists than men deliberating on matters of the city*, cf. what Cleon says at III,38,4 the Athenians are θεαταὶ μὲν τῶν λόγων, ἀκροαταὶ δὲ τῶν ἔργων, paraphrased by Hornblower (1991), 426 "when speeches are to be heard, you behave like spectators, but, where actions are concerned, you are content to be a mere audience", on the negative connotation in σοφιστῶν see Classen-Steup (1892) *ad loc.*, the same sentiment is expressed in D. II,12; V,2; XIX,3; LI,2; Aesch. I,178 f.; II,146.

<sup>54</sup> See LSJ s.v. ἄτοπος 2, with reference to this text.



the inventiveness of the speaker that impresses the audience. When looking at the opposites of *καινός*, the contrast appears to be between that which is well-known, traditional and customary (expressed by *ειωθός*, *ἥθας*, *πολλάκις θρηλούμενος*, *παλαιός*, *ἀρχαῖος*, and - in a more general sense - *ὁ αὐτός*)<sup>55</sup> and what deviates from it. See e.g.:

ἀλλ', ἦ δ' ὅς, ὧδε λέγω, οὐδὲν καινόν, ἀλλ' ὅπερ ἀεὶ καὶ ἄλλοτε καὶ ἐν τῷ παρεληλυθότι λογῷ οὐδὲν πέπαυμαι λέγειν.<sup>56</sup>

And:

καὶ τούτων πάντων οὐδὲν ἐστὶ καινόν οὐδ' ἡμέτερον εὕρημα, ἀλλ' ὁ παλαιός, ὃν οὗτος παρέβη, νόμος οὕτω κελεύει νομοθετεῖν.<sup>57</sup>

Thus it seems that *καινότης/καινός* probably refers to a phenomenon well established in the rhetorical tradition.<sup>58</sup> This tradition can be traced back to the teaching of the sophists, especially given what Socrates says on the subject in the *Phaedrus*. Much of the discussion in this dialogue is concerned with the question of what constitutes valid philosophical rhetoric, and when Phaedrus recites the speech on the subject of love he has just heard from Lysias, this provides the occasion for Socrates to analyse and criticise this specimen of rhetoric. The Lysianic speech is first characterized by Phaedrus as "some sort of speech on love"<sup>59</sup>: in it Lysias defends the paradoxical theme that a boy should not surrender to the advances of one who is in love with him, but rather to one who is not. By maintaining this Lysias is said to prove himself to have been "clever" (*κεκόμψευται*) or inventive. In having Lysias choose this subject-matter and thus raise expectations about the way in which this subject will be developed, Plato puts the speech clearly in the context of the writings of the sophists.<sup>60</sup> This is confirmed

<sup>55</sup> Cf. the maxim *πάντα πάντα χρόνῳ ἀρχαῖα καινὰ γίνονται* DK II, 389 Anm. 5 (maybe to attributed to Kriyas), Ar. *HA* 606 b 20 *ἀεὶ φέρεται τι Λιβυῇ καινόν* (*always something fresh in Libya*) a proverb on the diversity of animals in Libya, cf. Zenobius *Proverbia* 2,51), Soph. *OR* 916. *ἐννοεῖται τὰ καινὰ τοῖς κάλοι τεκμαίρεται*.

<sup>56</sup> Plato *Phd* 100 b 1-3 *Well, said Socrates, what I mean is this, and there is nothing new about it. I have always said it, in fact I have never stopped saying it, especially in the earlier part of this discussion* [tr. Tredennick, in Hamilton-Cairns]

<sup>57</sup> D. XX, 89 *And in all this there is nothing new, no innovation of our own, but the old law, transgressed by Leptines, lays down this procedure in legislation.* [tr. J. H. Vince 1970]

<sup>58</sup> See Hudson-Williams (1948), 77 (who, however, confines the technique to the expression of conventional thoughts in new words), cf. Sickling (1962), 113: referring to Plato *Phdr.* 261 d

<sup>59</sup> Pl. *Phdr.* 227 c 4 *ὁ γὰρ τοι λόγος, περὶ ὃν διετρίβωμεν, οὐκ οἶδ' ὅντινα τρόπον ἐρωτικὸς*

<sup>60</sup> See Norden (1915), 69, Anm. 1 *'κομψὸν zierlich, dann überhaupt geistreich' stammt aus der alten Sophistenzeit, das sehen wir aus Aristophanes, Euripides, Platon* (with references); cf. De Vries (1969), 37 *ad loc*

when Phaedrus says that in his view Lysias is the ablest writer of the day, using the phrase δεινότητος ὦν τῶν νῦν γράφειν (228 a 1), and thereby playing on the programmatic slogan used by the sophists, that their teaching will make pupils "capable speakers" (δεινὸς λέγειν).<sup>61</sup>

After listening to the speech, Socrates is invited by Phaedrus to give his opinion. In doing so he distinguishes between two different ways of analysis: first there are matters of style, such as "lucidity and terseness of expression, and consistently precise and well-polished vocabulary" (σαφὴ καὶ στρογγύλα, καὶ ἀκριβῶς ἕκαστα τῶν ὀνομάτων ἀποτετόρνενται)<sup>62</sup>, then there is the question whether the author has "said what he ought" (τὰ δέοντα εἰρηκότος τοῦ ποιητοῦ)<sup>63</sup>, which is a criterion of content. On both counts the speech seems unsatisfactory (οὐδ'...ἱκανόν), and to this point Socrates adds:

καὶ οὖν μοι ἔδοξεν, ὦ Φαῖδρε, εἰ μὴ τι σὺ ἄλλο λέγεις, δις καὶ τρίς τὰ αὐτὰ εἰρηκέναι, ὥς οὐ πάνυ εὐπορῶν τοῦ πολλὰ λέγειν περὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ, ἢ ἴσως οὐδὲν αὐτῷ μέλον τοῦ τοιούτου· καὶ ἐφαίνετο δὴ μοι νεανιεύεσθαι ἐπιδεικνύμενος ὥς οἷός τε ὦν τὰντὰ ἐτέρως τε καὶ ἐτέρως λέγων ἀμφοτέρως εἰπεῖν ἄριστα.<sup>64</sup>

According to Socrates the speech is repetitive: this may be because the author is short of themes on the given subject, or maybe this is of no concern to him. Rather the speech can be understood as a demonstration of virtuosity: Lysias tries to prove his ability to make variations on a certain theme, and to be successful with each of these. Furthermore, the theme is paradoxical and therefore also suited for the purpose of display of virtuosity on the part of the author. Because of both these features the speech is a typical example of sophistic writing: first interest is provoked

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Pl. *Men* 95 c 4 and *Symp* 198 c 2 (on Gorgias), on δεινός/δεινότης λέγειν and sophists in general see Guthrie (1971), 32 f

<sup>62</sup> 234 e 7-8 (tr. Hackforth, in Hamilton-Cairns); on the stylistic terminology and its origin in sophistic theories on style see O'Sullivan (1992), *passim*

<sup>63</sup> I.e.; on τὰ δέοντα as a rhetorical technical term cf. Gorgias *Helen* 2: λέξαι τὸ δέον ὀρθῶς; Isoc. XIII, 7-8. on objectionable teachers of wisdom (competitors in the field of pedagogy against whom Isocrates is here engaged in a polemic) who περὶ δὲ τῶν παρόντων μηδὲν τῶν δέοντων μὴτ' εἰπεῖν μῆτε συμβουλεύσαι δυναμένους, cf. XV, 86, 276-277, see Hudson-Williams (1948), 79; Homblower (1987), 46-49

<sup>64</sup> 235 a 1-6 *Perhaps you won't agree with me, Phaedrus, but really it seemed to me that he said the same things several times over, maybe he is not very clever at expatiating at length on a single theme, or possibly he has no interest in something like that, in fact it struck me as an extravagant performance, to demonstrate his ability to say the same thing twice, in different words but with equal success* (tr. Hackforth, with slight alterations by me)

by the *a priori* unexpected thesis, and its skillful treatment is proof of the author's virtuosity.<sup>65</sup>

Later in the discussion, Socrates deals with the achievements of earlier sophists on the techniques of rhetoric (266 c 1 f.). He deals with the contents of manuals, in which one can find rules on style as well as on the parts a speech should have. Even though his words are ironical, the passage can still serve as evidence for the teachings of the sophists.<sup>66</sup> He explicitly draws attention to Tisias and Gorgias:

Τεισίαν δὲ Γοργίαν τε ἑάσομεν εὐδεν, (1) οἱ πρὸ τῶν ἀληθῶν τὰ εἰκότα εἶδον ὡς τιμητέα μᾶλλον, (2) τὰ τε αὐτὸ μικρὰ μεγάλα καὶ τὰ μεγάλα μικρὰ φαίνεσθαι ποιοῦσιν διὰ ῥώμην λόγου, (3) καινὰ τε ἀρχαίως τὰ τ' ἐναντία καινῶς, (4) συντομίαν τε λόγων καὶ ἄπειρα μήκη περὶ πάντων ἀνηῦρον;<sup>67</sup>

Socrates attributes the discovery of four different techniques to the representatives of Sicilian rhetoric: (1) argumentation on the basis of probability, (2) alteration of the apparent status of statements, (3) variation, (4) capability of varying the speech's length. The elements (1) and (4) can be left out of consideration here<sup>68</sup>, but (2) and (3) are relevant to the question at hand. The first pair of opposites (important-unimportant) seems to foreshadow the technique later referred to by the technical terms *αὐξησις* and *μείωσις*.<sup>69</sup> An example of this technique can

<sup>65</sup> On the genre of (par)adoxography see Van der Poel (1996), Pease (1926); cf. also Lasserre (1944); Ferrari (1987), 88-95; on variation as typical of sophists and rhetorical technique see Cole (1991), 12-14, 20-22, 76-77.

<sup>66</sup> Ferrari (1987), 70-71; De Vries (1969), 219 f.

<sup>67</sup> 267 a 5 f.: *Should we let Tisias and Gorgias rest, who realized that probability deserves more respect than truth, who could make trifles seem important and important points trifles by the force of their language, who dressed up novelties as antiques and vice versa, and found out how to argue closely or at unterminal length about anything and everything* [tr. Hackforth; I follow De Vries in taking the sentence as a (rhetorical) question and have altered the translation accordingly].

<sup>68</sup> On (1) see Gagarin (1994), 46-57; on (4) "horizontal amplification" cf. *Grg.* 449 c 4: on Gorgias' contention that he can speak concisely Socrates answers: καὶ μοι ἐπιδείξιν αὐτοῦ τούτου ποιήσαι, τῆς βραχυλογίας, μακρολογίας δὲ εἰς αὐθις (*Give me an exhibition of this brevity of yours, and reserve a lengthy discourse for another time*, tr. Woodhead), *Prt.* 334 e 4 - 335 a 2: Socrates to Protagoras. ἀκήκοα γοῦν...ὅτι σὺ οἶός τε εἰ καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ ἄλλον διδάξαι περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν καὶ μακρὰ λέγειν, ἐὰν βούλῃ, οὕτως ὥστε τὸν λόγον μηδέποτε ἐπιλείπειν, καὶ σὺ βραχεῖα οὕτως ὥστε μηδένα σὺ ἐν βραχυτέροις εἰπεῖν· εἰ σὺν μέλλεις ἐμοὶ διαλέξεσθαι, τῷ ἐτέρῳ χρὴ τρῶσκ πρὸς με, τῇ βραχυλογίᾳ (*What they told me is...that you have the gift both of speaking yourself and of teaching others to speak, just as you prefer - either at length, so that you never run dry, or so shortly that no one could beat you for brevity. If then you are going to talk to me, please use the second method and be brief*, tr. Guthrie); on *makrologia* and *brachylogia* see Cole (1991), 96.

<sup>69</sup> This technique can be labelled "vertical amplification" (on the terminology see E.R. Curtius (1963), 483-4). see W. Plobst, *Die Auxesis*, München 1911, 3: "Die Kunst, Taten oder persönliche Eigenschaften über ihre wirkliche Größe hinaus zu steigern."

be found in the manual attributed to Anaximenes of Lampsacus, who gives the rules for anticipation of the opponent's arguments: δὲ δὲ τὰ μὲν ἐκείνων μικρὰ ποιεῖν, τὰ δὲ σαυτοῦ αὖξιν, ὡς ἐν ταῖς αὖξήσεσι προακήκοας.<sup>70</sup>

With regard to (2) one should bear in mind that a distinction is necessary between this theoretical concept as such and its distortion in the popular slogan that sophists were able "to make the weaker cause seem stronger". This is a pejorative rendering of what the sophists taught in order to discredit them.<sup>71</sup>

The phrasing of technique (3) is reminiscent of the previous descriptions of καινότης, especially the sophistic technique mentioned by Aristophanes (*Ra.* 1107, see above) of "bringing up old or new arguments" (ἀναφέρειν τὰ παλαιὰ καὶ τὰ καινὰ). Once again, it appears from texts of Plato that this insistence on "newness" is typical of the sophists and their claims of rhetorical skill. A clear illustration of this can be gained from another passage in the *Gorgias*, where Socrates talks with Callicles. The latter complains that Socrates keeps saying the same things:

ΚΑΛ. Ὡς αἰεὶ ταῦτὰ λέγεις, ὦ Σώκρατες

ΣΩ. Οὐ μόνον γε, ὦ Καλλικλείης, ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν <sup>72</sup>

Elsewhere Socrates explicitly says that "to hold to the same" is typical of philosophy: ἡ δὲ φιλοσοφία αἰεὶ τῶν αὐτῶν (*Grg.* 482 a 7), and the way in which he describes his critical attitude is also always the same: ἔμοιγε ὁ

<sup>70</sup> Anax. *AR* 1439 b 5-7. You must minimize the arguments of your opponents and amplify your own, as you have already learnt to do from the instructions about amplification [tr. Forster], cf. 1425 a 27 f., where the argumentation on war and peace is presented and the technique of amplification is to be applied: τὰ μὲν τῶν ἐναντίων ταπεινῶντες, τὰ δ' ἡμετέρα ταῖς αὖξήσεσι μεγάλα καθιστῶντες (belittling the points of superiority possessed by the enemy and exaggerating those which we ourselves enjoy [tr. Forster]), cf. *Ar Rh* 1403 a 17 f. τὸ δ' αὖξιν καὶ μειοῦν οὐκ ἔστιν ἐνθυμήματος στοιχείον· ταῦτα δ' ἐστὶ πάντα περὶ ἃ οἱ συλλογισμοὶ καὶ ἐνθυμήματα. amplification and depreciation are not an element of enthymeme: all these things are the subject-matter of deductions and enthymemes (tr. Rhys Roberts). He relegates the technique of amplification and depreciation (the technique to "show that a thing is great or small"· πρὸς τὸ δεῖξαι ὅτι μέγα ἢ μικρόν) to the category of subject-matter rather than argumentation as such.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. *Ar Nu* 1020 f. with J. Scholten, *Retoren en demotatie. Funkties en disfunkties van de retorika in klassiek Athene*, diss. Groningen 1990, 18, *Ar Rh* 1402 a 24-26, on the distinction between the pejorative and positive interpretation see Schiappa (1991), 103-116, for the common man's negative impression of sophists in the 4th century see Isoc. XIII.1, XV.168, XV.15 where the pejorative reading is starting-point for his apology, on the misrepresentation of sophists see Wilcox (1943), 113-133.

<sup>72</sup> Pl. *Grg.* 490 e 9-10. Callicles: How you keep saying the same things, Socrates! - Socrates: Not only that, Callicles, but about the same matters [tr. Woodhead], cf. 491 b 6-7 (Socrates to Callicles): σὺ μὲν γὰρ ἐμὲ φης αἰεὶ ταῦτὰ λέγειν, καὶ μέμνη μοι, on the possibility of these being authentic words of Socrates see Dodds (1976), 290.

αὐτὸς λόγος ἐστὶν αἰεὶ (Crg. 509 a 4). The same point is made by the Socrates in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* to distinguish himself from the sophist Hippias, who also complains against Socrates' repeating himself. On Socrates' reply that he (Hippias) will of course never say the same thing twice on the same matter because of his great knowledge, the sophist's answer is:

ἀμέλει, πειρώμαι καινόν τι λέγειν αἰεὶ.<sup>73</sup>

A similar description of Hippias' methods is given in a later source: Hippias is said to have taken his subject-matter from both poetry and prose and to have composed a speech using this material:

ἐγὼ ἐκ πάντων τούτων τὰ μάλιστα [καὶ] ὁμόφυλα συνθεῖς τοῦτον καινὸν καὶ πολυειδῆ τὸν λόγον ποιήσομαι.<sup>74</sup>

Thus the conclusion seems to be that "newness" was an item in the programme of the sophists. It is difficult to establish, however, what exactly is meant when they the sophists spoke of καινότης. Evidence in Aristophanes indicates that the concept is connected with the use of arguments (see above). Socrates' description of the technical concepts attributed to Tisias and Gorgias seems to imply that the newness-phrase belongs to the field of style, as the verb to supply in the phrase (καινά τε ἀρχαίως τὰ τ' ἐναντία καινῶς (λέγειν)<sup>75</sup>), suggests. This restriction does not seem compulsory, though. The immediate context does not exclude the possibility that subject-matter may still be included. Indeed, from Cleon's words, as they are reported by Thucydides (see above), it appears that it is not only by stylistic devices that the Athenians are carried away, but also by the content of the arguments itself. It may very well be, then, that form as well as content are in the scope of rhetorical καινότης.

### 3. Isocrates.

Καινότης is presented and described by Isocrates as an element of his rhetorical programme. He appears to be influenced by the sophistic tradition in his own theorizing on this point, but he ultimately differs from it. From a passage in the prooemium of his *Panegyricus* one can gain a better understanding of what he means by this "newness".

<sup>73</sup> Xen.Mem. IV,4,6: of course, I always try to say something new

<sup>74</sup> Clem Alex. VI,7,45 (= fr. 86 B 6 DK): by taking what is homogeneous from all these sources together I will make this new and variegated speech.

<sup>75</sup> De Vries (1969), 223 ad loc.

Isocrates presents the theme of his discourse in 3: ἤκω συμβουλευέσων περί τε τοῦ πολέμου τοῦ πρὸς τοὺς βαρβάρους καὶ τῆς ὁμονοίας τῆς πρὸς ἡμᾶς αὐτοῦς "I have come before you to give my counsels on the war against the barbarians and on concord among ourselves". He does this with awareness that many, calling themselves sophists, have already presented a speech on this theme, but he

(a) ἅμα μὲν ἐλπίζων τοσοῦτον διοίσειν ὥστε τοῖς ἄλλοις μηδὲν ὥποτε δοκεῖν εἰρησθαι περὶ αὐτῶν

(b) ἅμα δὲ προκρίνας τούτους καλλίστους εἶναι τῶν λόγων, οἵτινες περὶ μεγίστων τυγχάνουσιν ὄντες.<sup>76</sup>

Consideration (a) refers to the competition between authors. Isocrates regularly expresses his intention to improve on the work of predecessors, a principle known as ὑπερβολή (see below on 5)<sup>77</sup>. The second consideration on the importance of the proposed theme can be found in other panegyric texts as well<sup>78</sup>, but here there is an additional programmatic element typical of Isocrates. Speeches like these offer an opportunity for displaying ability (τοὺς λέγοντας μάλιστ' ἐπιδεικνύουσι) and are profitable for the audience (τοὺς ἀκούοντας πλείστ' ὠφελοῦσιν). What Isocrates means by "the greatest affairs", a subject claimed by him elsewhere too<sup>79</sup>, can be deduced from his *Panathenaicus*, where he is speaking of his preferences:

οὐ περὶ μικρῶν τὴν προαίρεσιν ποιούμενος, οὐδὲ περὶ τῶν ιδίων συμβολαίων οὐδὲ περὶ ὧν ἄλλοι τινὲς ληροῦσιν, ἀλλὰ περὶ τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν καὶ βασιλικῶν καὶ πολιτικῶν πραγμάτων, δι' ἃ προσήκειν φόβῳ μοι τοσοῦτῳ μᾶλλον τιμᾶσθαι τῶν ἐπὶ τὸ βῆμα παριόντων, ὅσῳ περ περὶ μειζόνων καὶ καλλιόνων ἢ 'κεῖνοι τοὺς λόγους ἐποιοῦμην.<sup>80</sup>

The list of subjects of "affairs of Hellas, kings and states" reflects the scope of Isocrates' activity as a publicist. He wrote discourses on matters of general politics, and addressed them to communities like the

<sup>76</sup> Isoc. IV,4: (a) *expecting to be so far superior to them that it will seem as if no word had ever been spoken by others on this subject and (b) at the same time selecting those speeches as the best who are on the subject of the greatest affairs.*

<sup>77</sup> On this principle in general see Stemplinger (1912), 152-158. Cf. IV,11. τοὺς πρὸς ὑπερβολὴν πεποιημένους (sc. λόγους), see also the verb ὑπερβάλλεσθαι X,3: πῶς γὰρ ἂν τις ὑπερβάλαιτο Γοργίαν; X,13 τὰ μὲν μικρὰ ῥάδιον τοῖς λόγοις ὑπερβάλλεσθαι

<sup>78</sup> See e.g. Lysias II,3

<sup>79</sup> X, 5, 8, 12, cf. commentary p. 168-169 *ad loc.*

<sup>80</sup> XII, 11. *I did not choose the subject of small matters, or private contracts, or the things on which others foolishly speak, but of the affairs of Hellas, kings and states - subjects because of which I thought to be entitled to higher honour than those who come and stand on the platform, in proportion as my speeches were on greater and nobler subjects.*

Athenian assembly or individuals like king Philip of Macedon. But already at the outset of his career as a publicist he claimed general affairs as his field, as in the *Helen*, where he says that it is his aim to pursue the truth καὶ περὶ τὰς πράξεις ἐν αἷς πολιτευόμεθα (5).

To these general introductory considerations Isocrates connects more specific statements on aspects of the present situation. He applies the considerations (a) and (b) to the actual speech:

(c) ἔπειτ' οὐδ' καιροὶ πω παρεληλύθασιν, ὥστ' ἤδη μάτην εἶναι τὸ μεμνησθαι περὶ τούτων. τότε γὰρ χρή παύεσθαι λέγοντας, ὅταν

(c.1) ἢ τὰ πράγματα λάβῃ τέλος καὶ μηκέτι δέη βουλευέσθαι περὶ αὐτῶν,

(c.2) ἢ τὸν λόγον ἴδῃ τις ἔχοντα πέρας, ὥστε μηδεμίαν λελεῖφθαι τοῖς ἄλλοις ὑπερβολήν.<sup>81</sup>

This dual consideration is then elaborated thus:

(c.1') ἕως δ' ἂν τὰ μὲν ὁμοίως ὥσπερ πρότερον φέρηται,

(c.2') τὰ δ' εἰρημένα φαύλως ἔχοντα τυγχάνῃ,

πῶς οὐ χρή σκοπεῖν καὶ φιλοσοφεῖν τοῦτον τὸν λόγον, ὅς ἦν κατορθωθῇ, καὶ τοῦ πολέμου τοῦ πρὸς ἀλλήλους καὶ τῆς ταραχῆς τῆς παρούσης καὶ τῶν μεγίστων κακῶν ἡμᾶς ἀπαλλάξει;<sup>82</sup>

Isocrates' decision not to address some issues depends on two criteria. The first (c.1/c.1') concerns the conditions which create the issue and could be labelled external: as soon as these conditions cease to be present, the issue is resolved, and no further discussion is necessary. The second (c.2/c.2') regards the discussion of the issue itself and is therefore internal: as long as there has been no satisfactory treatment of the problem resulting in its solution, discussion and development can be continued and a new contribution is possible.

To these considerations on the issue in its factual aspects, both extrinsic and intrinsic<sup>83</sup>, another consideration is added, which has to do with the specific task and possibilities of the speaker/author. Isocrates

<sup>81</sup> IV, 5: *Furthermore, the right moment has not yet gone by, so that it would be futile now to bring up this subject. For only then should we cease to speak, when (c 1) either the affair has come to an end and it is no longer necessary to take counsel on it, or one sees that the discussion is complete, so that there is no more room for improvement by others.*

<sup>82</sup> IV, 6: (c.1') *But as long as conditions remain the same as before and (c 2') what has been said appears to be inadequate, do we not have the duty to investigate and reflect upon this discussion, which if brought to a successful end, will deliver us from the warfare between ourselves, the present upheaval, and the greatest ills?*, cf. Sandys (1872), 46 ad loc.

<sup>83</sup> The distinction made by Buchner (1958), 17-18 between factual and personal ("Isokrates... mit dem sachlichen Anliegen also das persönliche Interesse des Rhetors verquickte") at this instance does not seem adequate: the considerations made here concern the general problem of the issue and its components, rather than the individual interest of the rhetor.

now introduces the question of the formal treatment of the issue and enters the technical sphere of rhetoric:

(d.1) πρὸς δὲ τούτοις, εἰ μὲν μηδαμῶς ἄλλως οἶόντ' ἦν δηλοῦν τὰς αὐτὰς πράξεις ἄλλ' ἢ διὰ μιᾶς ιδέας, εἶχεν ἂν τις ὑπολαβεῖν ὥς περιέργον ἐστὶ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον ἐκείνοις λέγοντα πάλιν ἐνοχλεῖν τοῖς ἀκούουσιν

(d.2) ἐπειδὴ δ' οἱ λόγοι τοιαύτην ἔχουσι τὴν φύσιν, ὥσθ' οἶόντ' εἶναι περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν πολλαχῶς ἐξηγήσασθαι, καὶ τὰ τε μεγάλα ταπεινὰ ποιῆσαι καὶ τοῖς μικροῖς μέγεθος περιθεῖναι, καὶ τὰ τε παλαιὰ καινῶς διελθεῖν καὶ περὶ τῶν νεωστὶ γεγεννημένων ἀρχαίως εἰπεῖν,

(d.3) οὐκέτι φευκτέον ταῦτ' ἐστὶ περὶ ὧν ἕτεροι πρότερον εἰρήκασιν, ἀλλ' ἄμεινον ἐκείνων εἰπεῖν πειρατέον.<sup>84</sup>

What Isocrates addresses here (d. 1-3) is the first task of the rhetorically skilled author in the total configuration of the activities relevant to the composition of the speech. The remarks made by Isocrates are clearly programmatic, and, as was already noticed by Longinus<sup>85</sup>, this part of the prooemium can be regarded as an ἐπάγγελμα "programme"<sup>86</sup>. After considering the general demand for improvement on predecessors, the selection of worthy subject-matter and the subject-matter itself in its factual aspects (a - c), he now turns to rhetorical technicalities. First he states the fundamental precondition for the demand of variety. If there existed only one way to treat a subject, every return to this subject would be useless and a burden on the audience. This is countered by a statement that old subjects must no longer be avoided, but rather that an improved speech should be realised (d.3). Realisation of this aim is based

<sup>84</sup> IV, 7-8 (d.1) *In addition, if it were in no other way possible to present the same subject-matter except in one form, one might suppose it to be superfluous to trouble the audience once more by speaking in the same way as those <before him> (d.2) but since discourses are of such nature that they can go on at length in many different ways on the same subject to bring what is great to a low level and invest what is small with importance, to treat what is old in a new way and to speak on what recently happened in an old way - , (d.3) we must no longer avoid the subjects spoken about before by others but we must try to speak better than they*

<sup>85</sup> Longin 38,2 where (d.2) is cited (with the significant substitution of οὐκ αὖτις for φύσιν) and it is added that Isocrates σφεδὸν γὰρ τὸ τῶν λόγων εγκωμίων ἀπιστίας τῆς καθ' αὐτοῦ τοῖς ἀκούουσι παράγγελμα καὶ προοίμιον ἐξέθηκε (*one could almost say that he made his eulogy of speeches into an introductory announcement of mistrust against himself, on παράγγελμα in the sense of "programme"*) cf Longin 2,1 τεχνικὰ παραγγέλματα ὥς εἰπεῖν ἐν παραγγέλματι.

<sup>86</sup> On ἐπάγγελμα as 'announcement of one's art' or "programme" see Ar. Rh 1402 b 25 τὸ Πρωταγόρου ἐπάγγελμα, cf Pl. *Plt.* 319 a 3-7 (Socrates speaking) δοκεῖς γὰρ μοι λέγειν τὴν πολιτικὴν τέχνην καὶ ὑπενεῖσθαι ποιεῖν ἄνδρας ἀγαθοὺς πολίτας - αὐτοῦ μὲν οὖν τοῦτο ἐστίν, ἔφη (sc. ὁ Πρωταγόρας), τὸ ἐπάγγελμα δ' ἐπαγγέλλομαι (*I take you to be describing the art of politics, and promising to make men good citizens. That, said he (Protagoras), is exactly what I profess to do* tr. Guthrie), cf Pl. *Men.* 95 b 10, *Euthyd.* 273 e 5 f., *Grg.* 447 e 2 (on Gorgias) τί ἐστὶν δ' ἐπαγγέλλεται τε καὶ διδάσκει, see also Ch. II p. 22 & n. 33 69 on Isoc. XIII as "programme" or "manifesto", see Steidle (1952), 259



on the fact that discourses (λόγοι) have the capacity to deal with one and the same subject in different ways (d.1), a capacity which manifests itself in two fashions, each in a twofold differentiation (d 2):

A:

- τὰ μέγала ταπεινὰ ποιῆσαι "to make what is great low";
- τοῖς μικροῖς μέγεθος περιθεῖναι "to confer greatness upon what is small".

B:

- τὰ παλαιὰ καινῶς διελθεῖν "to recount what is old in a new way";
- περὶ τῶν νεωστὶ γεγεννημένων ἀρχαίως εἰπεῖν "to speak on what recently happened in an old way".

On this passage the following remarks should be made

1. The argument as a whole is the expression of a general aim<sup>87</sup>: the rhetor should treat a subject, even though it has been addressed by other rhetors before him, and he should improve on his predecessors. This is a repeated statement of the principle of ὑπερβολή, already mentioned in (a). The achievement of this aim is dependent upon the realisation of the potentialities of speeches (οἱ λόγοι τοιαύτην ἔχουσι τὴν φύσιν, ὥσθ' οἰόντ' εἶναι...; cf. Longinus' rendering cited above). Thus it can be said that the phrases A and B express the rhetorical aims the rhetor should try to achieve.

2. Phrases A and B provide a parallel to what was said by the Platonic Socrates in the *Phaedrus* on the achievements of the Sicilian representatives of early rhetoric (see above). They were credited with three separate contributions: except argumentation from probability and the technique of makro-/brachylogia, they were able to "make the small look great and the great small by the power of discourse, and <express> the new as old and the old as new" (τὰ τε αὐτὰ μικρὰ μεγάλα καὶ τὰ μεγάλα μικρὰ φαίνεσθαι ποιοῦσιν διὰ ῥώμην λόγου, καινὰ τε ἀρχαίως τὰ τ' ἐναντία καινῶς). The concept as formulated here by Isocrates consists of the same elements, albeit that the phrasing is not identical. These elements are:

- a. it is due to the specific nature of speech that variation in rhetoric is possible: Pl.: διὰ ῥώμην λόγου ≈ Isoc.: οἱ λόγοι τοιαύτην ἔχουσι τὴν φύσιν;
- b. the variation manifests itself in the contrasting pairs of "big" and "small", "old" and "new": Pl.: τὰ μικρὰ μεγάλα καὶ τὰ μεγάλα μικρὰ

<sup>87</sup> The verbal adjectives are not accompanied by an agent and therefore the emphasis is on the action expressed by the verb see KG I, 447

φαίνεσθαι = Isoc.: τὰ τε μεγάλα ταπεινὰ ποιῆσαι καὶ τοῖς μικροῖς μέγεθος περιθελίνα / Pl.: καινὰ τε ἀρχαίως τὰ τ' ἐναντίον καινῶς = Isoc.: τὰ τε παλαιὰ καινῶς διελθεῖν καὶ περὶ τῶν νεωστὶ γεγενημένων ἀρχαίως εἰπεῖν.

From the phrasing in this passage and Plato's cited above, it may be concluded that the concept of "newness" was known as a "slogan" used by the sophists to draw attention to their rhetorical skill

3. This point is corroborated by the fact that Isocrates says that subject-matter used by predecessors is *no longer* (οὐκέτι) to be avoided, a detail often disregarded.<sup>88</sup> Against the background of the evidence in Aristophanes and Plato, this οὐκέτι indicates that since the introduction of the variation-technique by the sophists the renewed treatment of old subject-matter has become a possibility for the rhetor to prove his skill and virtuosity.<sup>89</sup> Here also it seems that Isocrates is part of the tradition of the sophists.

4. It should be remembered that Isocrates' remarks are made at the outset of what is to be a panegyric speech – a specimen of the rhetoric of praise. As can be seen from later theorists on rhetoric, the technique of amplification and depreciation was considered to be especially at home in this kind of speeches. Aristotle puts it thus ὅλως δὲ τῶν κοινῶν εἰδῶν ἅπασιν τοῖς λόγοις ἢ μὲν αὖξησης ἐπιτηδειοτάτη τοῖς ἐπιδεικτικαῖς, τὰς γὰρ πράξεις ὁμολογουμένας λαμβάνουσιν, ὥστε λοιπὸν μέγεθος περιθελίνα καὶ κάλλος.<sup>90</sup> The technical rules Isocrates presents here are suitable to the purpose of this particular genre: other rhetorical genres like the dicanic, mentioned explicitly (see c. 11: τοὺς ἀγῶνας τοὺς περὶ τῶν ἰδίων συμβολαίων), are excluded from the scope of these rules.<sup>91</sup> It may be that the limitation of the "newness"-concept to this rhetorical genre is to be attributed to Isocrates. The sources quoted on the sophists above do not

<sup>88</sup> Eg. tr. Norlin *one must not shun the subjects*, Cairns (1972), 98-100 fails to incorporate this point in his discussion of this passage

<sup>89</sup> Stemplinger (1912), 127 refers to the sophists and their capacity jedes schriftstellerische Objekt nach den Wünschen des Hörers (oder Lesers) und Darstellers zu fassen und in allen Farbenschatierungen abzutönen" and cites the phrase attributed to Protagoras τὸν ἥσσω λόγον κρείσσω ποιεῖν (80 A 21 DK), cf. Aul. Gell. NA V, 3, 7, where the same words are cited and where it is stated that Protagoras promised to teach his pupils by what activity of words the weaker case could be made the stronger (pollicebatur se id docere quam verborum industria causa infirmior fieret fortior, quam rem Graece ita dicebat τὸν ἥττω λόγον κρείττω ποιεῖν)

<sup>90</sup> Ar. Rh. 1368 a 26-29 And, in general, of the classes of things common to all speeches, the amplification is most suitable for declamations, where we take the actions as admitted facts, and our business is simply to invest these with greatness and beauty [tr. Rhys Roberts, with alterations], for the meaning of τῶν κοινῶν εἰδῶν cf. Grimaldi (1980), 221-222 *ad loc.*, cf. Anax. AR 1427 b 37 f., Longin. 12,1

<sup>91</sup> See Isoc. XII, 11 cited above (n 62), Wilcox (1943)

imply such a limitation, and furthermore it should be taken into consideration that Isocrates does emphasize that what came to be called epideictic rhetoric is the genre where he has introduced innovations.<sup>92</sup>

Thus, it is in this respect that Isocrates distinguishes himself from the sophists: whereas he recognizes the variation-ideal as expressed by them, he considers it to be applicable to a particular genre of rhetoric. Of course, this genre contains a number of different sub-genres, such as the panegyric, the political speech<sup>93</sup>, and the encomium, which indicates that he is not just speaking about "speeches on the past"<sup>94</sup>

From what follows in the prooemium of the *Panegyricus* one can gain a somewhat more concrete understanding of what καινότης is about. After having stated the general principle, Isocrates now turns to the subject-matter involved in this speech, and the way to handle it.

(e.1) αἱ μὲν γὰρ πράξεις αἱ προγεγενημέναι κοινὰ πᾶσιν ἡμῖν κατελείφθησαν,

(e.2) τὸ δ' ἐν καιρῷ ταύταις καταχρήσασθαι καὶ τὰ προσήκοντα περὶ ἐκάστης ἐνθυμηθῆναι καὶ τοῖς ὀνόμασιν εὖ διαθέσθαι τῶν εὖ φρονούντων ἴδιόν ἐστιν.<sup>95</sup>

The phrase αἱ πράξεις αἱ προγεγενημέναι "the actions of old time" seems to resume ταῦτα περὶ ὧν ἕτεροι πρότερον εἰρήκασιν of (d 3). This phrase probably refers to "the past" in a very general sense. When speaking of the past, Isocrates uses a number of different terms, like τὰ γινόμενα, αἱ πράξεις τῶν προγόνων, τὸ παλαιόν, τὰ ἔργα γινόμενα.<sup>96</sup> Judging from what Isocrates characterizes as "historical", the scope of history has its starting point in the legendary times of the Trojan War (and even before) and goes on until events that took place recently (400-350 BC). Here, as emphasis is so clearly on rhetorical theory, he seems to refer to the past as potential subject-matter for speeches. It is less probable, therefore, to restrict the interpretation of these remarks to the genre of the Funeral Oration.

In (e.2) Isocrates presents the methods by which his aim formulated above can be achieved. The task of the accomplished rhetor is first to use his subject-matter while observing the rules entailed in the

<sup>92</sup> Wersdörfer (1940), 38-40, Ussher (1990), 8

<sup>93</sup> On the definition of λόγος πολιτικός see Ch. V, p. 169 f

<sup>94</sup> See Eucken (1983), 147 with Anm. 19

<sup>95</sup> IV, 9 (e 1) *For the events of the past are left as a common heritage to us all, (e 2) and to use them with due measure, and to conceive what is fitting to each <of them> and to make a good composition in phrase, is typical of the intelligent*

<sup>96</sup> See Hamilton (1979), 291 f

principle of καιρός (on which see ch. III) Next, each element of this subject-matter should be dressed in appropriate thoughts, i.e. the element of the past should be used properly as material in an argumentative structure.

An example may clarify this last point: in a polemic with his rival Polycrates, Isocrates criticizes the use he made of information on the despot Busiris. Polycrates lost his credibility when he attributed to Busiris impossible exploits (ἀδύνατα), whereas Isocrates restricts himself to his achievements: ἀλλὰ τοσούτῳ πλέον ἡμῖν ἀπέχεις τοῦ πιστὰ λέγειν, ὅσον ἐγὼ μὲν οὐδενὸς αὐτὸν αἰτιῶμαι τῶν ὀδυνάτων ἀλλὰ νόμων καὶ πολιτείας, αἵπερ εἰσι πράξεις τῶν ἀνδρῶν τῶν καλῶν κάγαθῶν· σὺ δὲ τοιούτων δημιουργὸν ἀποφαίνεις ὧν...οὐδεὶς ἂν ἀνθρώπων ποιήσειεν<sup>97</sup>. This incorrect procedure of Polycrates is referred to by χρῆσθαι: in his eulogy he incorporated the stories of Busiris' shifting the course of the river Nile and of his cannibalism, of which he offered no proof. This being the case, he has no right to criticize Isocrates: "you cannot demand of others a procedure you do not in the slightest degree use (κεκρημένους) yourself (c.31).

Finally the accomplished rhetor should form his thoughts (arguments) using in the right words.

It is on these three components of method that the rhetor proves his individual ability (ἴδιον). These components, presented as a sequence, are καταχρήσθαι, ἐνθυμηθῆναι, διαθέσθαι to organize the material, to construct arguments, and to compose the right phrases.

Finally, Isocrates recapitulates the main points he made in this section of the prooemium, restating the principle of competition and its application to rhetoric:

(f.1) ἡγοῦμαι δ' οὕτως ἂν μεγίστην ἐπίδοσιν λαμβάνειν καὶ τὰς ἄλλας τέχνας καὶ τὴν περὶ τοὺς λόγους φιλοσοφίαν, εἴ τις θαυμάζοι καὶ τιμῇ μὴ τοὺς πρῶτους τῶν ἔργων ἀρχομένους, ἀλλὰ τοὺς ἄρισθ' ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἐξεργαζομένους,

<sup>97</sup> XI, 32: No, you are removed from giving a credible account to the same degree as I do not make him responsible for the impossible but for laws and a constitution, and these are the achievements of honourable men; but you present him as the author of such things as...no man could perform.

(f.2) μηδὲ τοὺς περὶ τούτων ζητοῦντας λέγειν περὶ ὧν ὑδεῖς πρότερον εἴρηκεν, ἀλλὰ τοὺς οὕτως ἐπισταμένους εἰπεῖν ὡς οὐδεὶς ἂν ἄλλος δύναται.<sup>98</sup> Here the pursuit of epideictic rhetoric is described in terms of competition. Improvement in the arts in general, and in rhetoric in particular can be made if two criteria are met first, one should acknowledge the importance of striving after perfection (τοὺς ἄρισθ' ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἐξεργαζομένους), and second, that one should compete in the same field in order to be able to judge skill (ἐπισταμένους εἰπεῖν).<sup>99</sup>

Now that the principle of *καινότης* has been described in general, it is possible to gain a more specific insight in what the principle means in practice by looking at instances where it is applied

#### 4. Isocrates: *καινότης* in rhetorical contexts.

In the opening section of his *Helen*, Isocrates criticizes groups of competitors in the field of discourse. He distinguishes three different groups (c.1):

[1] X,1 εἰσὶ τινες οἱ μέγα φρονούσιν, ἣν ὑπόθεσιν ἄτοπον καὶ παράδοξον ποιησάμενοι περὶ ταύτης ἀνεκτῶς εἰπεῖν δυνήσονται· καὶ καταγεγραμμάσιν οἱ μὲν οὐ φάσκοντες οἷόν τ' εἶναι ψευδῇ λέγειν οὐδ' ἀντιλέγειν οὐδὲ δύω λόγῳ περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν πραγμάτων ἀντειπεῖν, οἱ δὲ διεξιόντες ὡς ἀνδρία καὶ σοφία καὶ δικαιοσύνη ταυτὸν ἐστὶ, καὶ φύσει μὲν οὐδὲν αὐτῶν ἔχοντες, μία δ' ἐπιστήμη καθ' ἅπαντων ἐστίν· ἄλλοι δὲ περὶ τὰς ἑριδας διατρίβουσι τὰς οὐδὲν μὲν ὠφελοῦσας, πράγματα δὲ παρέχειν τοῖς πλησιάζουσιν δυναμένας. 'Εγὼ δ' εἰ μὲν ἑώρων νεωστὶ τὴν περιεργίαν ταύτην ἐν τοῖς λόγοις ἐγγενημένην καὶ τούτους ἐπὶ τῇ *καινότητι* τῶν εὐρημένων φιλοτιμουμένους, οὐκ ἂν ὁμοίως ἐθαύμαζον αὐτῶν· νῦν δὲ.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>98</sup> IV,10 (f.1) Now it is my opinion that the greatest advance could be made in every art and especially in the study of oratory, if not those were admired and honoured who make the first beginning in any pursuit, but those who bring each of them to its best perfection (f.2) and not those who seek to speak on subjects no one spoke about before, but those who know how to speak as no one else could

<sup>99</sup> On the thought of the most accomplished practitioner of an art being its originator cf. HWR s.v. *aetologia* [Bons], 203 with Ann. 4, on skill as a criterion in literary criticism see Verdenius (1983), 20-24

<sup>100</sup> There are some who are much pleased with themselves if after setting up an extraordinary and absurd subject, they succeed in discussing it in an acceptable way, and men have grown old, some asserting that it is not possible to say or contradict what is false nor to oppose two arguments on the same matter, others arguing that courage, wisdom and justice are identical and that we possess none of these by nature, but that there is only one knowledge concerning them all, and still others are busy with disputations that are good for nothing and capable of giving trouble to their pupils

There are thus three groups<sup>101</sup> active in the field of discourse, whose works are characterized by Isocrates as "futile": their subjects are out of the ordinary and contrary to expectation. But besides being useless, they are not even original in their ideas. If these subjects would have been introduced recently (νεωστί), then the newness of the inventions (καινότητι τῶν εὐρημένων), on which these men take pride, would not have been so much out of place. But if one looks back at the preceding generation of what Isocrates calls sophists (σοφιστάς) - and he mentions Protagoras, Gorgias, Zeno and Melissus, c 2-3 -, it becomes evident that the same ideas were already proposed by them. At this point it is relevant to note (1) that these groups are described as claiming to be presenting something new and (2) that the word used, by Isocrates and probably (as one might surmise by implication) by themselves as well, is καινότης. Apparently the slogan used by the sophists is still valid in the context of the debate on discourse. Their claim, however, is not justified: in this case it appears that the older sophists have preceded them.

At the end of his discourse Isocrates returns to the issue of content. After having presented his discourse on Helen and having remarked that many more topics could have been used (67: πολὺ δὲ πλείω τὰ παραλελειμμένα τῶν εἰρημένων ἐστίν<sup>102</sup>), he enumerates a number of potential topics for another discourse, such as taking Helen as a symbol of Hellenic superiority over the barbarians (67-68). His concluding sentence is (69):

[2] X, 69 ἦν οὖν τινὲς βούλωνται ταῦτα διεργάζεσθαι καὶ μακύνειν, οὐκ ἀπορήσουσιν ἀφορμῆς, ὅθεν Ἑλένην ἔξω τῶν εἰρημένων ἔξουσιν ἐπαινεῖν, ἀλλὰ πολλοῖς καὶ καινοῖς λόγοις ἐντεύζονται περὶ αὐτῆς<sup>103</sup>

Here καινός refers to subject-matter relating to Helen that has not been used by Isocrates but that is available for other writers. It is potential

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*As far as I am concerned, if I would see that this futile activity would have established itself only recently in discourse and that they were priding themselves on the novelty of their inventions, I would not be surprised at them in the same degree but as it is*

<sup>101</sup> On the identification of these groups see the commentary p. 167 f. *ad loc.*

<sup>102</sup> Far more has been omitted than what has been said

<sup>103</sup> If, then, some are willing to develop this subject and treat it in some length, they will not be at a loss for a starting-point from which they can praise Helen apart from what has been said, but they will hit upon many new arguments concerning her

subject-matter to be introduced in another speech and could be selected and developed. The context suggests that this statement concerns the stage of invention in composing a speech. If a writer wants to develop a theme and treat it in length, he will easily find a starting-point for his argument. The phrase *μηκύνειν* is similarly used in a technical sense in the *Busiris*, 44:

πολλῶν δ' ἐόντων εἰπεῖν ἐξ ὧν ἂν τις καὶ τὸν ἔπαινον καὶ τὴν ἀπολογίαν  
μηκύνειν, οὐχ ἡγοῦμαι δεῖν μακρολογεῖν.<sup>104</sup>

This sentence is parallel to the one in *Helen*. Both are technical statements on the way a specific speech is to be composed and both relate to the topics available. On the basis of this parallelism one can clarify what is being said:

- the ἀφορμή<sup>105</sup> or "point of departure" from which (ὅθεν) a laudatory speech starts can be interpreted as the ἔνοντα or "existing points" with which (ἐξ) one can spin out a speech. The "existing points" can be seen as the potential subject-matter or arguments available to a writer on a given subject.

- *μηκύνειν* as a technical term can be interpreted as "amplify": to make a speech longer by adding more arguments.

Thus the *Helen* ends with a return to the issue which already dominated the prooemium: the selection of subject-matter and its treatment. While beginning with a critique of *invals* and then presenting an exemplary speech, and finally returning to the original issue, Isocrates underlines the programmatic character of this speech. It is an ἐπάγγελμα and a lesson by example of Isocratean rhetoric (see commentary). Relevant for the discussion here is that *καίνος* occurs in a technical context and refers to existing subject-matter that can be used in speeches and thereby made new.

Not only content, but also form can be considered under *καίνότης*. This occurs at the very opening of the *Antidosis*, where Isocrates draws attention to the peculiar nature of the discourse that is about to be read (1):

<sup>104</sup> Although there are many points available from which one can make the praise or defense longer, I don't think I need to prolong my speech

<sup>105</sup> As "point of departure" it can refer to "the tool with which to do something" (VII,32, V,63; II,4; XIV,40, XIX,6), "a principle of life" (IX,28), and "argument" (Ep IX 2)

[3] XV, 1 Εἰ μὲν ὅμοιοι ἦν ὁ μέλλων ἀναγνωσθήσεσθαι τοῖς ἢ πρὸς τὰς ἀγῶνας ἢ πρὸς τὰς ἐπιδείξεις γιγνομένοις, οὐδὲν ἂν οἶμαι προδιαλεχθῆναι περὶ αὐτοῦ· νῦν δὲ διὰ τὴν καινότητα καὶ τὴν διαφορὰν ἀναγκαῖόν ἐστι προειπεῖν τὰς αἰτίας, δι' ἃς οὕτως ἀνόμοιον αὐτὸν ὄντα τοῖς ἄλλοις γράφειν προειλόμην· μὴ γὰρ τούτων δηλωθεῖσῶν πολλοῖς ἂν ἰσως ἄτοπος εἶναι δόξειεν.<sup>106</sup>

First it should be noted that the discourse is explicitly presented as one that is written (γράφειν προειλόμην) and to be read (ἀναγνωσθήσεσθαι): it is, therefore, not conceived as a discourse to be actually delivered. The judicial form it has, being composed as an apologetical speech on the occasion of a trial for an exchange of property<sup>107</sup>, is purely fictitious. Secondly, the discourse is different from two established rhetorical *genera*. discourses for ἀγῶνες or places where, generally speaking, a confrontation of views occurs. The unspecified phrase used by Isocrates justifies the inclusion of both judicial and deliberative rhetoric under this heading. The other genre is the epideictic, which can refer to virtuoso display or public performance of literary prose pieces.

After stating what the discourse is not, Isocrates underlines its newness and difference, and says that without further explanation it may to its public seem ἄτοπος "out of place". Its main characteristic is its strangeness seen as a result of its difference from what the public expects. What makes it so strange? The question is answered by Isocrates in c. 9-12, where he reveals what the discourse is: it is a λόγος μικτός "mixed discourse". The writing of such a discourse is not easy or simple, but presents a difficult task (9). In c. 10 the components of the discourse are described as follows:

ἔστι γὰρ τῶν γεγραμμένων (a) ἓν μὲν ἐν δικαστηρίῳ πρέποντα ῥηθῆναι, (b) τὰ δὲ πρὸς μὲν τοὺς τοιούτους ἀγῶνας οὐχ ἀριούττονα, περὶ δὲ φιλοσοφίας πεπαρησιασμένα καὶ δεδηλωκότα τὴν δύναμιν αὐτῆς (c) ἔστι δέ τι καὶ τοιοῦτον ὃ τῶν νεωτέρων τοῖς ἐπὶ τὰ μαθήματα καὶ τὴν παιδείαν ὁρμῶσιν ἀκούσασιν ἂν συνενέγκοι, (d) πολλὰ δὲ καὶ τῶν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ πάλα γεγραμμένων

<sup>106</sup> If the discourse which is about to be read aloud would be similar to the ones either for the places of contest or for public performance, I would not have given it any preliminary discussion; but as it is, because of its newness and its being different it is necessary to state beforehand the reasons why I have preferred to write a discourse which is so unlike the others. If this would not be made clear, it might to many seem strange.

<sup>107</sup> On the procedure of ἀντίδοσις or challenge to the exchange of property in order to avoid a liturgy see A. R. W. Henderson, *The Law of Athens Procedure*, Oxford 1971 236-8.



ἐγκαταμεμιγμένα τοῖς νῦν λεγομένοις οὐκ ἀλόγως οὐδ' ἀκαίρως, ἀλλὰ προσηκόντως τοῖς ὑποκειμένοις.<sup>108</sup>

The written product contains:

- (a) some parts appropriate for a courtroom;
- (b) other parts are unfitted for such contests, but are statements on learning or intellectual pursuit (φιλοσοφία) and expositions on its capacity;
- (c) there is such matter that would be profitable to hear for these young men who pursue knowledge and education;
- (d) there is inserted in the present speech much from what was already written in earlier works.

The presence of parts under (a) can be accounted for by the fictitious judicial setting of the discourse. They are appropriate, because Isocrates uses this setting as an opportunity to defend his views on education and his activity as a teacher, it is only natural that he would repeat his concept of φιλοσοφία under (b) and give his advice for prospective pupils. The categories (b) and (c) together provide a reformulation of what can be labelled as the programme of his school. The apologetical character of the discourse explains the insertion of earlier material: the selection appears to be representative for Isocrates' publicizing as a whole. By discussing each item he can defend and clarify his message from the beginning to its end. This purpose is explicitly stated later, at c. 55, before the actual quotation of the parts of earlier speeches:

δέομαι δὲ τῶν πολλάκις ἀνεγνωκότων τὰ μέλλοντα ῥηθήσεσθαι μὴ ζητεῖν ἐν τῷ παρόντι παρ' ἐμοῦ καινοὺς λόγους, μηδ' ὀχληρόν με νομίζειν, ὅτι λέγω τοὺς πάλαι παρ' ὑμῖν διατεθρυλημένους. εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἐπίδειξιν ποιούμενος ἔλεγον αὐτοὺς, εἰκότως ἂν εἶχον τὴν αἰτίαν ταύτην· νῦν δὲ κρινόμενος καὶ κινδυνεύων ἀναγκάζομαι χρῆσθαι τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον αὐτοῖς.<sup>109</sup>

<sup>108</sup> *Of what is written (a) some things have their proper place in a court-room, (b) others are not suited for contests like those, but are frank statements on learning and clarifications of its power: (c) and there is something of such nature that is profitable for those young men to hear who set out on the field of acquiring knowledge and education, (d) and much of what I have written in the past is mixed with what is said presently, in a way not without good reason nor without due measure, but relevant to the subject at hand.*

<sup>109</sup> *I ask those of you who have read many times what is going to be said now not to look for new discourse on my part and not consider me burdensome because I say what has been abundantly talked about since long ago amongst you; if I were saying this while giving a display, I would reasonably be subject to this complaint, but at this moment, because I am on trial and at risk, I am forced to use them in this way.*

The citations will be *verbatim*, and there will be no variation. Isocrates will not present them “otherwise” (δι’ ἑτερῶν) but will produce “exactly those” (αὐτοὺς τούτους) which were reason for his calumniators to indict him (c 56). This passage confirms that *καινότης* which consists of variation (δι’ ἑτέρων) would be out of place in this discourse, but this kind of newness can be part of display (ἐπίδειξις).

*Καινά* referring to variation occurs in *To Philip* 84 where Isocrates is about to repeat his call for a war of the Hellenes against the barbarians already put forward in his *Panegyricus*. He says to be at a loss

[4] V, 84 οὔτε γὰρ ταῦτά βούλομαι λέγειν τοῖς ἐν ἐκείνῳ γεγραμμένοις, οὔτ’ ἔτι καινὰ δύναμαι ζητεῖν <sup>110</sup>

The opposition between ταῦτά βούλομαι λέγειν and *καίνα* δύναμαι ζητεῖν makes it clear that variation is the point here.

Thus, the combination of judicial, programmatic and apologetical writing - forms of writing by themselves well established - in one and the same discourse is what makes the *Antidosis* so different and unexpected. That is why it is *καινός* “new”.

The special character of the *Antidosis* and, by extension, most of Isocrates’ writing, is further elucidated in c 45-47. In defense of his publications he points to the fact that there are “as many forms of discourse as there are of poetry” (τροποὶ τῶν λόγων εἰσὶν οὐκ ἐλάττους ἢ τῶν μετὰ μέτρου ποιημάτων). He mentions

- (a) οἱ μὲν γὰρ τὰ γένη τὰ τῶν ἡμιθεῶν ἀναζητοῦντες writers of genealogy;
- (b) οἱ δὲ περὶ τοὺς ποιητὰς ἐφιλοσόφησαν writers of literary criticism of poets,
- (c) ἕτεροι δὲ τὰς πράξεις τὰς ἐν τοῖς πολεμοῖς συναγαγεῖν ἐβουλήθησαν writers of the history of war,
- (d) ἄλλοι δὲ τινες περὶ τὰς ἐρωτήσεις καὶ τὰς ἀποκρίσεις γεγόνασιν, οὓς ἀντιλογικοὺς καλοῦσιν writers who occupy themselves with questions and answers, <works> they call “antilogokoi”.

There are more to name, but Isocrates does not give them all: he confines himself to mentioning the one literary form which is fitted for him (ἧς ἐμοὶ προσήκει), i.e. the form or kind of prose he produces. This

<sup>110</sup> I do not want to say the same as what has been said there (so in the *Panegyricus*), nor am I any longer able to look for new things.

category is defined on two grounds on its content (περί) and on its form (πεποιημένοις μετά λεγομένοις)

[5] XV, 47 εἰσὶ γάρ τινες γράφειν δὲ προήρηνται λόγους οὐ περὶ τῶν ἰδίων συμβολαίων ἀλλ' Ἑλληνικοὺς καὶ πολιτικοὺς καὶ παιηγυρικοὺς, οὓς ἅπαντες ἂν φήσαιεν ὁμοιοτέρους εἶναι τοῖς μετὰ μουσικῆς καὶ ῥυθμῶν πεποιημένοις ἢ τοῖς ἐν δικαστηρίῳ λεγομένοις καὶ γὰρ τῇ λεξεὶ ποιητικωτέρῃ καὶ ποικιλωτέρῃ τὰς πράξεις δηλοῦσι, καὶ τοῖς ἐνθυμήμασιν ὀγκωδεστέροις καὶ καινότεροις χρῆσθαι ζητοῦσιν, ἐτι δὲ ταῖς ἄλλαις ἰδεαῖς ἐπιφανεστέραις καὶ πλείοσιν ὅλον τὸν λόγον διοικοῦσιν <sup>111</sup>

The first differentiating criterion is that his discourse concerns national rather than individual interests, such as litigation on contracts. He is concerned with questions involving all citizens, and even all Hellenes. The second criterion is one of form: his discourse is composed rather like poetry. This is evident on three levels:

- the way in which things are said, the style (λεξεῖ),
- the material used, the thoughts (ἐνθυμήμασιν),
- the way his discourse is structured, its organization (διοικοῦσιν)

Kainότης is here used in relation with level two, the material the discourse uses (χρησθαι).

The importance of the demarcation from other forms of discourse is clear from what follows (47-50). The reason why men like to listen to this kind of discourse as much as poetry, and why they like to learn from it, is that writers in this kind of literature are considered wiser, better, and more beneficial (σοφωτέρους καὶ βελτίους καὶ μᾶλλον ὠφελεῖν δυναμένους) than judicial orators. This is based on the fact that the former have their capacity (δύναμιν) from learning (φιλοσοφία), and that they are not ephemeral but rather honoured in all societies and times (τοὺς δ' ἐν ἀπάσαις ταῖς ὁμιλίαις καὶ παρὰ πάντα τοῦ χρόνου ἐντίμους ὄντας καὶ δόξης ἐπικειοῦς τυγχάνοντας). Here Isocrates presents himself as heir to the tradition of the wise poet (σοφός) who, because of his status,

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<sup>111</sup> There are some who prefer to write discourses not concerning private contracts, but on Hellas, on the polis, and on solemn themes: discourses which all would say are more like works made with music and rhythm than the ones spoken in court. And rightly so, because they set their material forth in a style that is rather poetical and varied: they seek to use thoughts that are rather impressive and new, and further they also organize the discourse as a whole with sections that stand out and are of greater number.

can produce texts of poetical quality and can advise mankind. Like a poet, Isocrates is a literator and teacher at the same time.<sup>112</sup>

Isocrates can use *καινότης* also as a criterion to differentiate between qualities of discourse. At c. 79-80 he repeats his preference for "national" themes, and in c.81 states that writers of this kind of discourse should be held in higher esteem even than lawgivers, because they are rarer, have a more difficult task and need a more prudent mind (*σπανιώτεροι καὶ χαλεπώτεροι καὶ ψυχῆς φρονιμοτέρας δεόμενοι τυγχάνουσιν*). In a society such as Athens the following can be said about both activities, which were very comparable at an earlier stage (c. 82):

[6] XV, 82 ἐπειδὴ δ' ἐνταῦθα προεληλύθαμεν ὥστε καὶ τοὺς λόγους τοὺς εἰρημένους καὶ τοὺς νόμους τοὺς κειμένους ἀναριθμήτους εἶναι, καὶ τῶν μὲν νόμων ἐπαινέσθαι τοὺς ἀρχαιοτάτους, τῶν δὲ λόγων τοὺς καινοτάτους, οὐκέτι τῆς αὐτῆς διανοίας ἔργον ἐστίν.<sup>113</sup>

The task of the writer has become much more difficult. A lawgiver is much helped by the fact that many laws have come into existence and he can build on that. But for the writer of discourse, who is confronted with the same phenomenon in his field, the consequence is the opposite (c. 83):

λέγοντες μὲν γὰρ ταῦτὰ τοῖς πρότερον εἰρημένοις ἀναισχυτεῖν καὶ ληρεῖν δόξουσιν, καινὰ δὲ ζητοῦντες ἐπιπόνως εὐρήσουσιν.<sup>114</sup>

Consequently, the more a writer of discourse succeeds in his difficult task, the more he earns praise. The themes Isocrates prefers to discuss belong to this category (see also above on the *Helen*). Thus *καινότης* in relation to serious and national subject-matter can serve as the criterion for useful discourse.

*Καινότης* does not automatically have a positive qualification. It matters that a writer realizes in what genre he is working and what its rules and conventions are. This is clear from Isocrates' protreptic writing

<sup>112</sup> Cf. the prooemium of *Euagoras*; see also Ch. I, § 2

<sup>113</sup> But since we have progressed to that point where the discourses which have been spoken and the laws that are in existence are countless, and the oldest of laws and the newest of discourses are praised, this is no longer a task for the same kind of thinking

<sup>114</sup> For if they say the same things as what has been said before, they will seem to be shameless and to speak foolishly; but if they look for what is new, they will have difficulty finding it.

(παράινεσις), such as the *To Nicocles*. In c. 40-41 Isocrates gives consideration to the character of this kind of writing. If Nicocles would find that many things said in the discourse are well known, he should not be surprised. Much wisdom has, of course, been provided by previous generations. The rule to be observed here is the following (41):

[7] II, 41 ἀλλὰ γὰρ οὐκ ἐν τοῖς λόγοις χρὴ τοῦτοις ζητεῖν τὰς καινότητας, ἐν οἷς οὔτε παράδοξον οὔτ' ἄπιστον οὔτ' ἔξω τῶν νομιζομένων οὐδὲν ἔξεστιν εἰπεῖν, ἀλλ' ἡγεῖσθαι τοῦτον χαριέστατον, ὅς ἂν τῶν διεσπαρμένων ἐν ταῖς τῶν ἄλλων διανοαῖς ἀθροῖσαι τὰ πλεῖστα δυνηθῇ καὶ φράσαι κάλλιστα περὶ αὐτῶν.<sup>115</sup>

The καινότητες referred to here are novelties because they, as elsewhere, present departures from the known and expected. Here the point is that novelty refers to content rather than form: protreptic writing is about practical wisdom and the wish to organize one's life accordingly. The accomplished writer of protreptic seeks his material in the thoughts of others, collects it and puts it to finished form. These thoughts constitute the content<sup>116</sup> of the protreptic discourse. Thus, καινότης refers to content and its qualification depends on genre. Novelties that deviate from common knowledge have no place in paraenetic discourse.

### 5. Isocrates: καινός outside rhetorical contexts

In the *Panegyricus* Isocrates argues for the cultural superiority of Athens, and presents as his first argument the discovery of the art of agriculture. This was a gift from the goddess Demeter, together with the installation of her mystery cult at Eleusis. Before telling this story he says (28):

[8] IV, 28 καὶ γὰρ εἰ μυθώδης ὁ λόγος γέγονεν, ὅμως αὐτῷ καὶ νῦν ῥηθῆναι προσήκει.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>115</sup> And rightly so, because in the kind of discourse, where it is not possible to say what is extraordinary or incredible or outside common belief, one should not seek novelties, but one should consider him most accomplished, who is able to bring together most of what is scattered in the thoughts of others and to present them in the most beautiful way.

<sup>116</sup> On διανοία as "content" cf. Pl. *Lys.* 205 a 9 - b 3 οὐ τι τῶν μέτρων διδοῖται ἀκοῦσαι οὐδὲ μέλος εἶ τι πεποιήκας εἰς τὸν νεανίσκον, ἀλλὰ τῆς διανοίας, ἵνα εἰδῶ τινα τρόπον προσφέρει πρὸς τὰ παιδικά; see A.W. Nightingale, "The Folly of Praise: Plato's Critique of Encomiastic Discourse in the *Lysis* and *Symposium*", *CQ* 43 (1993), 115.

<sup>117</sup> Yes, even though the story is legendary, it deserves to be told now again.

After repeating the myth in c.28-29 he insists on its credibility, and adds proofs to support his view. The first proof consists of recourse to tradition (c.30): the ground for some to disbelieve the story, i.e. that it is old (ὡς ἀρχαίων ὄντων), can plausibly (εἰκότως) be turned around to be support trustworthiness:

διὰ γὰρ τὸ πολλοὺς εἰρηκέναι καὶ πάντας ἀκηκοέναι προσήκει μὴ καινὰ μὲν πιστὰ δὲ δοκεῖν εἶναι τὰ λεγόμενα περὶ αὐτῶν.<sup>118</sup>

The story about Demeter concerns events that happened a long time ago and might therefore be considered "not recent", but, because of its status as a tale of tradition, it is still worthy of belief. Here καινός occurs in a context of the critical examination of myth. This passage (c. 30-32) is one of a number in which Isocrates shows himself to be a critical and conscious assessor of the past, thereby conforming to the sophistic tradition.<sup>119</sup>

Similarly καινός is opposed to παλαιός in c. 43, where the founders of the Panhellenic festivals are honoured, because they provided the opportunity

τάς τε παλαιὰς ξενίας ἀνανεώσασθαι καὶ καινὰς ἐτέρας ποιήσασθαι.<sup>120</sup>

In the *Euagoras* Isocrates uses καινός to qualify stories by poets as "made up". In c. 36 he mentions the stories told by poets about returns to the throne by princes in ancient times (παλαιῶν καθόδων):

[9] IX, 36 οὗτοι γὰρ οὐ μόνον τῶν γεγενημένων τὰς καλλίστας ὑμῖν ἀπαγγέλλουσιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρ' αὐτῶν καινὰς συντιθέασιν.<sup>121</sup>

The contrast between "the most beautiful of those that happened" and "report" on the one hand and "new" and "compose by themselves" makes it clear that καινός here can be interpreted as "made up". It qualifies the story as fictitious, describing something that did not actually happen.

<sup>118</sup> Because of the fact that many have told the story and all have heard it it is correct to regard what is said about these events not as recent, but as trustworthy.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. XII, 149-50 (trustworthiness of historical data) see Hamilton (1979), 290-298; cf. also IX, 66 (critique of myth); see also p. 177-179 below.

<sup>120</sup> to renew old friendships and make other new ones.

<sup>121</sup> These do not only report the most beautiful of the ones that actually happened, but also by themselves compose new ones.

Comparable is the passage at c. 9, where Isocrates discusses the liberties poets have in their means of composition. With regard to content they can represent gods as conversing with men, and with regard to expression (δηλώσαι) they are not restricted to every day speech, but can express

τὰ μὲν ξένοις, τὰ δὲ καινοῖς, τὰ δὲ μεταφοραῖς <sup>122</sup>

Καινός here refers to the use of words that did not occur till then: neologisms. In later times this category of words would be termed ὄνομα πεποιημένον.<sup>123</sup>

## 6. conclusion

From Homer onward, originality as newness or freshness has been a concern of writers. Later it becomes an independent issue as the search for "newness" (καινὰ λέγειν), introduced as a criterion of self-identification by the sophists. By this they seek to arouse intellectual stimulation and interest.

Isocrates, an heir to the sophistic tradition, is also very much concerned with this concept. His usage of the programmatic key-word (καινός; καινότης) can be described as follows:

- (a) it can refer to freshness in style (variation of phrasing) as well as in content (selection of new potential material on a given subject);
- (b) it is used as a discriminatory criterion in polemical contexts: used positively, it refers to the quality (a) to be found as a requirement in Isocrates' own works; used negatively, taken as "novelties", it refers to the works of rivals (sophists as well as philosophers) in the field of discourse-writing.

<sup>122</sup> *Some things with exotic words, some with new words, others using figurative speech.*

<sup>123</sup> *Ar. Poet.* 1457 b 1 - 58 a 6, 1458 a 18 - 59 a 16, *Dion. Hal. Comp.* 25. 22-24

## Ch. V. The *Helen* as an example of Isocratean discourse.

### 5.1. Introduction. The Helen-theme in Greek Literature.

The figure of Helen appears often in Greek literature, from early epic in the ninth century BC until *Helen's Abduction* by Colluthus, the author of epic poetry in the late fifth century AD.<sup>1</sup> Evidently her life and significance stimulated the interest of many writers, who tried to discuss the effect of her exceptional beauty and address the question of her responsibility for the horrors of the Trojan War. During the course of centuries writers treated this theme from different perspectives and presented a variegated whole of representations, reflecting their individual personalities and the differences in outlook of their respective times.

The literary representation of Helen is founded on the mythical figure of Helen, about whom there are different traditions in mythography. One of these seems to have been dominant: it appears to be the basis for most treatments in literature, and it is on this one version that Isocrates has founded his *Helen*. This vulgate version can be summarized as follows:

From the union of Zeus (disguised as swan) and Leda there resulted two eggs. From the first of these Helen and Clytaemnestra were born, from the second Castor and Polydeuces. Of these children only Helen is unanimously mentioned as having divine parentage, of the others this is said only incidentally. They were considered natural children of Leda and Tyndareus, her husband and king of Sparta.

When she was twelve years old, Helen was abducted by Theseus. He, however, soon returned her later to her father. Then, being of marriagable age and exceptional beauty, she was wooed by many famous heroes. Among these were Diomedes, Ajax, Ulysses, Philoctetes, Idomeus, Patroclus and Menelaos (whose brother Agamemnon had married Helen's sister Clytaemnestra). In order to avoid conflict among the pretending heroes, Ulysses proposed that they

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<sup>1</sup> See Bruns (1905), Becker (1939), Ghali-Kahil (1955), Bertone (1970), Homeyer (1977); Braun (1982), Poulakos (1986), Jakel (1986) and Tuszynska (1987) focus their attention on Gorgias and Isocrates, for the iconography of Helen see *LIMC* IV-1, 498-563 and IV-2, 291-358.



all take an oath, by which they vowed to come to the aid of whoever became Helen's husband, if he would be wronged. Finally, Menelaos married Helen and, after Tyndareus' death, became king of Sparta.

Then, one day, at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, a conflict arose between the goddesses Hera, Athena and Aphrodite, over the question who was the most beautiful. This conflict was prompted by Eris, who brought a golden apple with the inscription "for the fairest" to the wedding banquet. The question was then settled by invoking the judgment of a mortal. For this the Trojan prince Paris, also known as Alexander, was chosen: he had been abandoned by his parents, king Priam of Troy and his wife Hecuba, and grew up on Mount Ida. He was called on as a judge in this contest, because he himself was exceptionally handsome, intelligent and, being a simple goatherd, pure.

The goddesses tried to influence Paris' decision by offering him special gifts. Hera offered wealth and power, Athena practical wisdom and success in battle. But Aphrodite offered marriage with the most beautiful woman ever: Helen. Finally Paris decided that the apple belonged to Aphrodite.

Later, after having been restored as prince of Troy, Paris came to Sparta as a guest at Menelaos' court. There he met Helen and, because of the inattentiveness of Menelaos, he was able to abduct her from Sparta. Thus she deserted her husband and daughter, Hermione, and took part of the court's treasure with her.

On their journey to Troy Paris and Helen were forced by storms to take refuge on Cyprus and in Egypt, but finally they reached king Priam's city at the mouth of the Bosphorus. The Greek heroes, true to their oath, united to assist Menelaos and organised under the leadership of Agamemnon an expedition against Troy, in order to retrieve Helen. The Trojans, however, were unwilling to restore her, and thus the siege of Troy began. For ten long years the war lasted and many were killed. Finally Troy was taken and destroyed.

After that, Helen and Menelaos were reunited, but he found himself unable to punish Helen for her conduct. They returned to Sparta.

Prior to Isocrates, the myth of Helen was treated by a number of authors, who all give attention to the question of how Helen's conduct

should be evaluated. The vulgate version of the myth leaves room for the possibility that Helen was not abducted against her will, but that she voluntarily left with Paris and knowingly deserted her husband and child. The Trojan War was a direct result of the fact that she was taken to Troy: this aggravated her responsibility for the bloodshed and desecration that took place during that war. The treatment of this question, Helen's guilt, can properly be defined as the Helen-theme in literature.

First of all, the treatment of the theme can be found in Homer's epics, where the figure of Helen appears a number of times and serves different literary purposes. First, in *Iliad* III, 145-165, she is present on the wall of Troy to inspect the Greeks and identify some of their leaders. Also present is a group of elder Trojans, who comment on her: they stress her beauty and consider it understandable that both Trojans and Greeks are willing to go to war for her sake (156-158). But they continue in a critical vein (159-160):

ἀλλὰ καὶ ὥς, τοίη περ ἑοῦσ', ἐν νηυσὶ νεέσθω  
μηδ' ἡμῖν τεκέεσσιν· ὅπισσιν πῆμα λίποιτο.<sup>2</sup>

The elders suggest Helen's responsibility for the calamity that will befall Troy and its inhabitants as a result of the siege. Here Helen's guilt is addressed for the first time in Greek literature. But at the same time, the elders do not remain untouched by her beauty: thus Homer introduces the fundamental ambiguity with regard to Helen. They feel sympathy and understanding as they acknowledge the influence and power of her beauty, but they are unable to forgive her for the misery she causes. The mixed reaction of love and hate is to become a recurrent motif in later treatments of the Helen-theme.

King Priam, who is also present on the wall, invites Helen to sit by him and offers her some comfort. He then refers to the role played by the gods in the explanation of what caused the war (164-165):

οὐ τί μοι αἰτία ἔσσι· θεοὶ νό μοι αἵτιοι εἰσιν,  
οἳ μοι ἐφώρμησαν πόλεμον πολύδακρυν Ἀχαιῶν.<sup>3</sup>

Here another motive is introduced: if the gods are responsible for what happens, Helen is not to be blamed. In that case she is a mere instrument

<sup>2</sup> Still, even if so beautiful, she should return home on the ships and not remain, causing misery to us and our children in the future.

<sup>3</sup> It is not you who is responsible: responsible, in my view, are the gods, who brought the lamented war with the Achaeans upon me.

in the hands of a superhuman major force. This also becomes a recurrent motive.

In the *Odyssey* the reaction of aversion towards Helen is predominant. In 11, 436-439 Odysseus, in his encounter with the spirit of the deceased Agamemnon in Hades, uses Helen as an example of the ways in which Zeus has brought misery to the house of Atreus:

ὦ πόποι, ἦ μάλα δὴ γόνον Ἀτρείος εὐρύσopa Ζεὺς  
ἐκπάγλως ἤχθησε γυναικείας διὰ βουλάς  
ἐξ ἀρχῆς· Ἑλένης μὲν ἀπωλόμεθ' εἵνεκα πολλοί,  
σοὶ δὲ Κλυταίμνηστρη δόλον ἤρτυε πηλόθ' ἐόντι.<sup>4</sup>

The negative evaluation of Helen is reinforced by parallelism with the case of Clytaemnestra, who consciously plotted to kill her husband. Similarly in other instances (14, 67-71; 17, 118-119) Helen is directly connected with the deaths of both Greeks and Trojans, and hence receives a negative evaluation. At the same time, the role of the gods is stressed as those ultimately responsible for man's fate. This procedure of double motivation is, of course, a typical element of the mentality present in archaic literature. It does not affect the observation that in these instances Helen is negatively perceived.

Another perspective is offered in 23, 218-224: there Helen is mentioned by Penelope, who maintains that she would never have been unfaithful to her husband, had she known that the Greeks would achieve her return to Menelaos' court. Penelope says (222-224):

τὴν δ' ἣ τοι ρέξαι θεὸς ὥρορε ἔργον αἰκίης·  
τὴν δ' ἄτην οὐ πρόσθεν ἐφ' ἐγκάτθετο θυμῷ  
λυγρὴν, ἐξ ἧς πρῶτα καὶ ἡμέας ἵκετο πένθος.<sup>5</sup>

Helen's action is again condemned as a shameful deed, but the responsibility lies with the god (Aphrodite: see 4, 261) who made her do it. The god caused her to be in a state of "blindness" or "delusion" (ἄτη), and therefore she was unfaithful to Menelaos and eloped with Paris. With this the motif of love is addressed, which in the case of Helen shows its destructive potential. The goddess of love clouded Helen's judgment and made her act in a way she would otherwise never have

<sup>4</sup> *Alas and woe is me! From the beginning has wide-seeing Zeus dreadfully visited the seed of Atreus through women's arts. What an army of us died for Helen; and now Clytaemnestra spins this web of death for you, while you are far away* [tr. T. E. Lawrence].

<sup>5</sup> *And surely a god made her do this shameful deed, and from that same moment she put a blindness in her mind, baneful, which first brought sorrow also to us*

done. Negative evaluation of her action is underlined by the intended contrast with Penelope's faithfulness to her husband: Helen's unfaithfulness is a negative foil for one of the main themes of the *Odyssey*.

A more positive image emerges from the description of Helen in Book 4, where she has returned to Sparta as king Menelaos' wife. In 4, 219-234 her knowledge of the healing power of herbs is highlighted: that knowledge she owes to Polydamna, an Egyptian woman. Here occurs the motif of the Egyptian connection, which evokes the atmosphere of arcane knowledge and even witchcraft in relation to Helen. This motif will return again in later treatments.

In his treatment of the Helen-theme Homer provides several motives (the love/hate attitude towards her; the gods who govern human fate; the power of love; the connection with Egypt) that leave the impression of an awareness on his part of the fact that her behaviour leaves room for opposing evaluations. His attitude toward the Helen figure, as it emerges from the evaluative comments of his characters, shows nuance and balance.<sup>6</sup> These motives became part of the set of stock issues raised in later treatments of the Helen-theme.

From the lyric period onwards the balanced approach is abandoned in favour of, in most cases, a clear condemnation of Helen's behaviour. This can be observed in Sappho's poem 16, where Helen's example is taken as evidence for the statement of the opening priamel that the most beautiful thing on the black earth (ἐπ[ὶ] γᾶν μέλαι[ν]αν...κάλλιστον) is not cavalry or infantry, but whatsoever a person loves. This statement is then easily made understood (σύνετον πόησαι) by referring to Helen, who far surpassed mankind in beauty, and who, probably under the influence of love<sup>7</sup>, deserted her husband and sailed to Troy, mindless of her child and parents. Even more negative and critical is Alcaeus, who in fragments 42 and 283 explicitly connects Helen to the horrors of the Trojan War. In fr. 42 she is used as a contrast to Thetis, wife of Peleus, and the grief that came to the Trojans

<sup>6</sup> This is also discernible in the way Homer represents Helen's own views in III, 428-436 and VI, 344-358, where she appears conscious of her guilt and showing regret. The representation enables the audience to feel sympathy for her; see also Lendle (1968), Snell (1973).

<sup>7</sup> Lines 11-12 read παράγ' αὐτὰν | ...] σάν, where the subject "love ("s power)" may plausibly be supplied: pace D.L. Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus. In Introduction to the Study of Ancient Lesbian Poetry*, Oxford 1959, 54, see E.M. Voigt, *Sappho et Alcaeus. Fragmenta*, Amsterdam 1971, 44.

"came from you (= Helen)": ἐκ σέθεν, line 3. Again, in fr. 283 Alcaeus remembers how Helen's heart was set afire and how she left Menelaos for the Trojan prince, who had violated his host's trust, and deserted her child and marital bed. The fragmentary poem ends with an evocation of the destruction and horrors of the war, and the deaths of many "because of that woman" (ἐν)νεκα κήνας, l. 14).

The negative approach is also the basis of Aeschylus' representation of Helen as a destructive instrument in the hand of Fate: as such she is on a par with her sister Clytaemnestra. Both women are instrumental in the retribution and destruction that haunts the house of the Atridae. This is expressed in harsh words and images in the second stasimon of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (681-781), where he plays on Helen's name by associating it to the verb ἐλεῖν "to ravage", and by suggesting the similarity between Helen and a goddess of vengeance. In this respect there is a parallel between her and Clytaemnestra, who claims the same role explicitly for herself (1552-3).

Another motif in the literary treatment of the Helen-theme is that of the phantom (εἰδῶλον), which represents a separate version of the Helen myth. According to this version king Proteus of Egypt kept Helen and the Spartan treasure behind and sent Paris on his way to Troy accompanied by a phantom of Helen. This story, which may have been first introduced by Hesiod<sup>8</sup>, was the basis of the so-called *Palinode* composed by the lyrical poet Stesichorus. The origin of this work is explained in Plato's *Phaedrus* 243 a-b, by describing it as an example of an "ancient mode of purification" (καθαρμὸς ἀρχαῖος). Stesichorus had offended Helen - probably in his poem entitled *Helen* - and was punished by loss of his eye-sight. To make amends he wrote a recantation, in which he defended her by telling the phantom story.<sup>9</sup>

In Gorgias' *Helen* the Helen-theme is used as material in a model speech to provide potential lines of argument in her defense. His approach is influenced by his rhetorical intentions: the fact that Helen

<sup>8</sup> According to a scholion on Lycophron *Alexandra* 822 by Tzetzes πρώτος Ἡσίοδος τῆς Ἑλένης τὸ εἰδῶλον παρήγαγε. Hesiod may very well have included this version in his *Γυναικῶν κατάλογος*, see Bertone (1970), 82 f.

<sup>9</sup> See M. Davies, *Poetarum Melicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, vol I, Oxford 1991, 177-180, s. v. Stesichorus, fr. 193 according to the author of P Oxy 2506 (= Chamaeleon fr. 29 Wehrli) this version constituted a "novelty" ὁ Στησίχορος οὕτως δὲ ἐκαινοτόμησε τὰς ἱστορίας. Cf. Pl. *Resp.* IX, 586 c 3-5 τὸ τῆς Ἑλένης εἰδῶλον ὑπὸ τῶν ἐν Τροίᾳ Στησίχορος φησι γενέσθαι περιμάχητον ἀγνοίᾳ τοῦ ἀληθοῦς.

went to Troy with Paris is not denied, but her responsibility is. In terms of the later *stasis*-theory, of which there are prefigurations discernible in 5th century literature, this argumentative starting-point can be characterised as the *στάσις* of *ποιότης*. Gorgias uses the traditional literary motives, with the exception of the phantom motive, as material for his argumentation and identifies four different arguments to prove she cannot be held responsible for the Trojan War. These arguments are, first, that she was subject to "force majeure", either because her abduction was ordered by the gods, or ordained by fate or chance; second, that she was abducted by force; third, that she succumbed to the power of speech; and fourth, that she was overwhelmed by the power of love. Thus the *Helen* is an instance of the apagogetic method of argumentation, by which the presentation of possibilities is followed by their refutation. In this methodological respect the *Helen* is similar to the other preserved works by Gorgias, the *Palamedes* and *On not-being*. The story of Helen serves as the material by which the procedure is exemplified.<sup>10</sup>

Herodotus' account of Helen (II, 112-120) has an elaborate version of the phantom-theme, for which he mentions the priests of the temple of "foreign Aphrodite" (ξείνη Ἀφροδίτη) - part of the sacred domain of Proteus - as his source. Because of the peculiar name "foreign Aphrodite" and on the basis of the story told by the priests, Herodotus conjectures (συμβάλλομαι) that the goddess worshipped in the temple is, in fact, Helen. He then tells the complete myth about Helen, in which all traditional motives are present, and furthermore he concludes that Homer was familiar with the Egypt-motive as well. This he infers from the passages VI, 289 f.; 4, 227 f.; 4, 351 f., but he observes that evidently Homer chose not to include this story because it was not as fitting for his epic as the one he did use (116: οὐ γὰρ ὁμοίως ἐς τὴν ἐποιοῖν εὐπρεπὴς ἦν τῷ ἑτέρῳ τῷ περ ἐχρήσατο). Next he considers the consequences of the phantom-story: was the story about the Trojan War a Greek fabrication, he asks the priests. They then tell the story how Menelaos came to Egypt after Troy had been taken and he had found out that Helen had not been held by the Trojans, as they had maintained all along. The Egyptians returned her to him and Menelaos made preparations to sail home.

<sup>10</sup> See Jäkel (1987), on apagogy in Gorgias see Solmsen (1975), 13 f.; on the *Helen* and its argumentative content see Braun (1982), 161-165

Adverse winds detained him, however, and he sacrificed two native Egyptian children. For this desecration he incurred the hate of the Egyptians, but he was able to escape and sailed in the direction of Libya. Finally Herodotus tries to assess the trustworthiness of the priests' account on Helen: on the basis of argumentation from probability he concludes (120,5) that the Trojans did not have Helen at the time and therefore were unable to return her to the Greeks. That they did not believe them was divine purpose: the utter destruction of the Trojans should prove to mankind that serious crime is punished by the gods by heavy retribution (τῶν μεγάλων ἀδικημάτων μεγάλοι εἰσὶ καὶ αἱ τιμωρίαι παρὰ τῶν θεῶν). In his interpretation of the story Herodotus shows himself to have a rational approach: he applies probabilities as criteria in his assessment and, instead of taking the myth at face value, he tries to determine its hidden meaning or moral content. This can be seen as a manifestation of the rationalism advocated and applied by the sophistic movement.<sup>11</sup>

Fifth-century tragedy introduces the element of human responsibility for his own actions in the treatment of the Helen-theme. This emerges clearly in Euripides *Trojan Women* 948 f., where both Hecuba and Menelaos point to Helen's voluntary act of leaving with Paris and her responsibility as a result of this.<sup>12</sup> Further, what may be called a casuistic approach is characteristic of the way Euripides introduces the Helen-theme in some of his tragedies. The traditional accusations are directed towards her in a number of instances<sup>13</sup>, and in others the case is even debated by parties from both sides.<sup>14</sup> Of these the debate between Hecuba and Helen in the *Trojan Women* is an example of Euripides' interest in opposite argumentation. Since the issue as such does not play an essential role in the play's plot, inclusion of the debate seems to reflect a general appreciation for attempts to argue a difficult or even impossible position: in this case the vindication of Helen's elopement. To argue the case of Helen presents a challenge to argumentative virtuosity, and to provide proof of this quality was the aim

<sup>11</sup> See Solmsen (1975), 172 f., Guthrie (1971), 178 f.; on the understanding of ὑπόνοια or "hidden meaning" as the aim of sophistic analysis see Richardson (1975), 65 f.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Eur. *Hipp.* 474 f., see also the sophistic use made of this argument by ἄδικος λόγος in Ar. *Clouds* 1076 f., see also the classic instance of Orestes's killing of his mother Clytaemnestra: an act perpetrated on divine command, for which he is at the same time held personally responsible.

<sup>13</sup> See e.g. *Orestes* 1142, 1584, *Iphigenia at Aulis* 76; *Andromache* 602 f.

<sup>14</sup> *Hecuba* 269, 442 f., esp. 629-658 (the second stasimon); *Trojan Women* 914-1032.

of paradoxographic discourse.<sup>15</sup> The phantom-story is the basis for Euripides' *Helen*, and it may even be that the account given by Herodotus suggested the plot.<sup>16</sup> The presentation of Helen as a virtuous woman waiting for her husband in Egypt, brought there by the will of the gods, constitutes an novel elaboration of the traditional phantom-motive.

Thus it seems clear that the Helen-theme enjoyed literary interest, and was treated by important authors before the publication of Isocrates' *Helen*. The literary tradition provided a number of different approaches and stock motives. In most cases the use of the Helen-theme provided an opportunity for a negative approach, in which Helen was responsible for the Trojan War. Her vulnerable position was an invitation to the sophists to use her case in their search for effective arguments and their virtuoso display. They contributed to the creation of a positive approach of the theme, which seems to originate in Hesiod and Stesichorus and which enabled Euripides to represent Helen as even virtuous.

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<sup>15</sup> See Solmsen (1975), 31.

<sup>16</sup> Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* 337 f. may serve as an indication that Herodotus' account of Egyptian history in the second book of his *Histories* (of which the Helen episode is part) was well-known at the time.



## 5.2. Translation

### Helen

*I (1) There are some who pride themselves if, after having chosen an extraordinary and absurd subject, they are able to speak about it in an acceptable way. Also there are old men some assert that it is not possible to say what is false, neither to contradict, nor to give two opposite accounts about the same matters, and others claim that courage, wisdom and justice are one and the same thing, and that by nature we possess none of these things, but that there is one knowledge concerning them all, still others busy themselves with disputations that are of no use and merely cause difficulties for their pupils.*

*(2) As far as I am concerned, if I saw that this futile activity arose recently in the field of discourse, and that these men placed their pride in the novelty of their discoveries, I would not wonder at them so much. But is there anyone now, who is such an ignoramus that he doesn't know about Protagoras and the sophists of his time, that they left us writings of similar nature and even more troublesome than these? (3) For how could one do better than Gorgias, who ventured to say that nothing of what is, exists, or Zeno, who tried to show that the same things are possible and impossible at the same time, or Melissus, who attempted to prove that all is one, although the number of things in nature is infinite?*

*(4) But even though these men made it so very clear that it is easy to construct a false discourse on any subject one may propose, they still busy themselves in this they, however, should let this tiresome pedantry go, which pretends to prove things in discourse but which has long since been proved wrong in actual life, and should pursue the truth. (5) they should educate their pupils in the transactions with which we maintain our society, and exercise them in the practice of these matters, considering that it is much better to form an opinion on useful things in a reasonably well fashion, than to have accurate knowledge on futile things, and to be slightly better in what is important than to be far superior in what is unimportant and has no value for life.*

*(6) And furthermore, they care for nothing else than to make themselves wealthy from young men. It is the philosophy concerned with disputations that is capable of doing this for they don't care about private or public affairs and enjoy those discourses most that do not serve a single practical purpose. (7) Now young men such as these may well be excused for having this frame of mind in*

everything they continue to incline to the extraordinary and the wonderful. But those who pretend to educate them deserve to be criticised, because they accuse those who are deceitful in private contracts and who unjustly use speech. But they themselves do something even more shocking than these: the former do damage to strangers, but they chiefly harm their pupils.

[8] They have caused false discourse to increase to such a degree that some now, seeing these men benefit from such a thing, dare to write that the life of beggars and fugitives is more enviable than that of other human beings, and they use it as proof that when they can say something about ignoble matters, they will easily have much to say on what is good and honourable [9] To me the most ridiculous of all seems that it is by arguments such as these that they try to convince us that they possess knowledge on public affairs, while they have opportunity to demonstrate this precisely where they put their claims: for it befits those who make a claim to wisdom and maintain that they are wise men, to be superior and excel private persons, not in things that nobody cares about, but where all compete with one another. [10] But now their behaviour resembles that of someone who pretends to be strongest of all athletes and enters a contest where nobody else would think it fit to meet him. For what sensible person would try to praise misfortune?

No, it is evident that it is out of weakness that they take refuge in doing this. [11] For there is only one way leading to writings such as these, and to find, learn, and imitate it is not difficult. But the discourses of common interest, the ones that are trustworthy, and those similar to these, are devised and put in words through many ways of presentation and appropriate timing that are hard to learn, and their composition is more difficult, just as it takes more effort to be solemn than to be derisive, or to be serious than to be joking. You can conclude that from the following. [12] no one who wished to praise flies, salt, and that kind of subject has ever been at a loss for words, but those who have endeavoured to speak on what is commonly accepted as good, honourable, and distinguished for virtue, have all failed to speak adequately about the possible topics. [13] For one cannot with one and the same mentality speak as required on each of these subjects: no, it is easy in discourse to supersede what is trivial, but difficult to attain the magnitude of the other subjects. And while it happens only rarely when speaking about subjects with repute that one finds something nobody else said before, on what is worthless and humble whatever someone might say is entirely original.

[14] That is why, of those who have wished to speak in praise, I compliment the one who wrote on Helen most, because he has recalled the memory of a woman, who was superior in birth, beauty, and repute. But all the

same, this small thing escaped him: he claims to have written an encomium on her, but he actually delivered a defense of her actions. [15] This discourse does not have the same shape nor concerns the same deeds, but quite the contrary: a defense befits those who are accused of injustice, praise those who are distinguished for some good.

But in order to prevent the impression of doing the easy thing and to criticize others without presenting something of my own, I will try to speak about this same woman, thereby omitting all that has been said by others.

**II** [16] I start my discourse with the origin of her family. While Zeus begat most of the demigods, of this woman alone he wanted to be called father. He was especially concerned with the son of Alkmene and the children of Leda, but he preferred Helen so much over Herakles that he provided him with strength, which can overcome all with force, but to her he allotted beauty, which by its nature can even rule over strength itself. [17] He knew that distinction and splendour do not arise from a quiet life but from wars and contests, and he wished not only to exalt their bodies to the gods, but also to leave their glory ever remembered: therefore he made his son's life full of toil and adventure, while he gave her a nature that is universally admired and contended.

**III** [18] First Theseus, called son of Aigeus but actually son of Poseidon, when he saw her not as yet in full maturity but already superior to the others, was so overwhelmed by her beauty that he, himself a man accustomed to rule others and although possessing a very great country and a very secure kingdom, thought that life would not be worth living among his present blessings without intimacy with her. [19] And since he was unable to take her from her guardians - they waited for the child's maturity and the oracle of the Pythian priestess - , he disregarded the power of Tyndareus, despised the might of Kastor and Polydeukes, and belittled all the dangers present in Sparta: he took her by force and brought her to Aphidna in Attika. [20] And he was so grateful to Peirithoos, his companion in the abduction, that when Peirithoos wished to court Kore, daughter of Zeus and Demeter, and asked his friends' help for the descent into Hades, he decided, since he was unable by his advice to dissuade his friend, to accompany him regardless of the evident danger. He thought he owed him this debt, and could not refuse any task Peirithoos would ask in return for his share in the dangers they had met.

[21] If the man who did this had been an ordinary person and not one of the most distinguished, it would not yet be clear if this discourse was a praise of Helen or an accusation of Theseus. But now we will find that of all other men of

high repute one is lacking in courage, another in wisdom, and another in some other of these attributes, but that he alone is wanting in none and possesses virtue complete in all respects

[22] It seems right to me to speak about this man even at greater length for I think that those who wish to praise Helen have this as the greatest pledge of good faith if we can show that the men themselves who loved and admired her deserved more admiration than others For with regard to what happens in our own day, it is only reasonable that we must judge on the basis of our own opinions, but in regard to events so long ago it is fitting that we show ourselves to be of one mind with the intelligent men of that age

[23] Well, the best I can say about Theseus is this he lived at the time of Herakles and he was his rival in glory For not only did they equip themselves with similar armour, but they also shared the same pursuits, while performing acts appropriate to their common origin For being born from brothers, the one from Zeus, the other from Poseidon, they were also brotherly in their ambitions they alone of former generations established themselves as champions of human life

[24] It came to pass that the one undertook adventures more famous and more great, the other more useful and more like a Hellene For Eurystheus ordered the one to bring back the cattle from Eurythia, to fetch the apples of the Hesperides, to bring up Cerberus, and other toils like that, from which he would not benefit others but bring danger to himself [25] The other, however, as his own master, chose those struggles from which he would emerge as benefactor either of the Hellenes or of his own country Thus the bull that was sent by Poseidon and ravaged the land, and which no human being dared to face, he subdued alone, thereby delivering the inhabitants of the city from great fear and much anxiety [26] And after that he became ally of the Lapiths and he fought against the Centaurs, creatures of a dual nature, who are superior in speed, strength and daring, and who destroyed some cities or made preparations to do so, and were threatening others He conquered them in battle, immediately put an end to their insolence and later caused their race to disappear from mankind.

[27] About the same time the monster, raised in Crete, born from Pasiphae, daughter of Helios, to whom the city sent in obedience to the oracle's command twice seven children, provoked Theseus' anger so much as he saw them led away and escorted by all the populace to a savage and certain death, and mourned while still alive, that he thought it better to die than to live as king of a city forced to pay so pitiable a tribute to the enemy [28] He joined them on their ship and triumphed over the creature, half man and half bull, that possessed strength as befits its origin

from such bodies Having thus saved the children Theseus returned them to their parents and freed the city from an obligation so savage, so terrible, and so ineluctable

[29] I do not know, however, how I will deal with the rest for now that I have turned to Theseus' exploits and started to speak about them, I hesitate to stop half-way and leave out the lawless conduct of Skiron, Kerkyon, and others whom he confronted and thus delivered the Hellenes from many great misfortunes I feel myself being carried beyond due measure, and I fear that I might seem to some to be more concerned about him than about the topic I originally announced [30] For both these reasons I prefer to leave out most because of irritation in my audience, and to treat the rest as concisely as I can, so that I will gratify both them and myself, and not completely surrender to those who are habitually jealous and criticize whatever is said.

[31] Well then, Theseus displayed his courage in those deeds in which he, on his own, was alone at risk, his knowledge of war he displayed in the battles that he fought together with the whole city, his piety towards the gods he showed at the time of the supplications of Adrastus and the children of Heracles he saved them by defeating the Peloponnesians in battle, and to Adrastus he restored, notwithstanding the Thebans' resistance, those who had died under the walls of the Kadmeia for burial, his other merits and his prudence he displayed in what has been said here before, and especially in the governance of his city

[32] For he saw that those who seek to rule citizens by force are slaves to others and that those who make life dangerous for others live themselves in fear, and are forced to wage war, both with their citizens against foreign invaders and with others against their fellow citizens, [33] and further that they plunder the temples of the gods, kill the best of their citizens, distrust their closest friends, live in no less anxiety than those in prison awaiting death, and that they are deemed fortunate for their seeming success, but that deep down they feel more anguish than others [34] For what is more painful than to live in constant fear that one of those near you might assassinate you, and to be afraid of your guards no less than those who plot against you? He despised all such men and considered them to be plagues rather than rulers of their country, he thus demonstrated that it is easy to rule alone and at the same time to be no worse disposed than those who live as citizens on equal footing

[35] And first of all by uniting the city, that was composed of separate scattered settlements, he made it so great that from that time onward to the present day it is the biggest of all Hellenic cities Next, after the establishment of a common

homeland and liberating the minds of his fellow-citizens, he instituted the rivalry for virtue open to all. he believed that he would be superior to them anyway, whether they practised virtue or neglected it, and he knew that honours bestowed by the high-minded are sweeter than those awarded by slaves.

[36] And far from doing anything against the wishes of the citizens he gave the people control over affairs of the community, while they considered him worthy to rule alone. they believed that his monarchy was more trustworthy and useful to the common good than their own democracy. For unlike other rulers he did not impose labours on others and enjoy the pleasures on his own, but the dangers he made his own and the benefits he bestowed to all in common.

[37] Thus he spent his life not as a victim of conspiracies but beloved, not preserving his rule with alien military force but protected by the good-will of the people, enjoying power like monarchs and benefactions like popular leaders. For so much in accordance with law and honour was his administration of the city that to this very day traces of his gentleness can be found in our customs.

[38] Well now, as for this woman born from Zeus who was able to control such excellence and moderation, how could one but praise her, honour her, and regard her as far superior to all other women who have ever lived? For surely we shall never be able to put forward a more trustworthy witness or more competent judge of Helen's own good qualities than Theseus' insight. But to avoid the impression that because of lack of material I spend time on the same theme and that I misuse the reputation of one man to praise her, I also want to speak on the further course of events.

IV [39] After Theseus' descent to Hades, when Helen returned to Lacedaimon and was of marriagable age, all the kings and rulers then had the same opinion about her: although they could have outstanding wives in their own cities, they disregarded marriage at home and came to be suitors of her. [40] While it was not yet decided who was to be her husband and all had an equal chance, it became evident to all that she was to be an object of universal contention. Therefore they held an assembly and they exchanged pledges to provide genuine assistance, if someone should try to take her away from the one who had been judged worthy of her each of them thought that he was thereby providing support for himself.

[41] All were deceived in their expectations except one, but nobody was mistaken about their shared common opinion. For shortly afterwards there arose amongst the gods a dispute on beauty, and Alexander, the son of Priam, was appointed as judge. Hera promised to give him kingship over all Asia, Athena promised victory in battle, and Aphrodite his marriage with Helen. [42] Not being able to make a

decision on their physical beauty but overwhelmed by the sight of the goddesses, he was forced to make judgement about their gifts: he chose living with Helen over all else, not with an eye to pleasure - although that, to be sure, is something preferred by intelligent men over many other things, but that was not what he was after - [43] no, he wished to become the son-in-law of Zeus, and he considered this to be a far greater and better honour than kingship over Asia, and he believed that great powers and dominions sometimes fall to insignificant men, but that nobody of future generations would be thought worthy of a woman like her; and furthermore he believed that he could leave his children no better possession than securing for them a descendancy from Zeus, not only from the father's side but also from their mother's. [44] For he knew that all other good fortunes quickly change, but that nobility of birth always remains with the same possessors, so that this choice would be to the advantage of all his family, whereas the other gifts would be so only for his own lifetime.

[45] No sensible person could criticize these reasonings, but some who do not consider a previous event but only look at what consequently happens, have already slandered him. Their lack of understanding can easily be seen by all from the slanderings they have uttered against him. [46] For how can they avoid ridicule, if they consider their own nature more capable than that of Alexander, the one preferred by the gods? Evidently, on this important dispute in which they got involved, they did not appoint just an ordinary man to make a decision, but obviously they took the selection of the best judge as seriously as they were concerned about the matter itself. [47] One must consider what kind of man Alexander was and form a judgement on him not from the resentment of those who lost the contest, but from the reasons why the goddesses upon deliberation unanimously preferred his insight. Nothing prevents even the innocent from ill-treatment by the stronger: but to receive such honour of being made judge of the gods while being a mortal, that is impossible except for a man far superior in intelligence.

[48] I am surprised anyone feels that Alexander decided wrongly to choose a life with Helen, for whose sake many of the demigods were ready to die. Would he not have been foolish, if he, while knowing that the gods were engaged in rivalry over beauty, himself had despised beauty, and would he not have thought that to be the greatest of gifts, about which he saw that these goddesses mostly concerned?

V [49] Who would have rejected marriage with Helen, at whose abduction the Hellenes were as indignant as if the whole of Hellas had been laid waste, and the barbarians were as proud as if they had conquered us all? It is clear how they

both felt, for although there had been many reasons for complaint between them before, on these they preserved peace, but on account of her they waged a war so great, not only in the intensity of its rage but also in the extent of its duration and the multitude of its armaments, as never had taken place before. [50] Although it was possible for one party to be free of the calamities that beset them by returning Helen, and for the other to live in peace for the time to come by forgetting about her, neither were willing to do so. On the contrary, the barbarians allowed their cities to be destroyed and their land ravaged, refusing to restore her to the Hellenes; and the Hellenes chose to stay in a foreign country, grow old there and never to see their families again rather than to abandon her and to return to their own home country. [51] And this they did not do out of devotion to the cause of Alexander or Menelaos: no, one party was champion of Asia, the other of Europe, in the belief that wherever Helen resided in person, that country would be most blessed.

[52] Such an ardent desire for the hardships of the campaign did not only take possession of the Hellenes and the barbarians, but even of the gods: they did not even dissuade their own offspring from taking part in the struggles around Troy. On the contrary, Zeus, although aware of his fate, nevertheless encouraged and sent Sarpedon, and Eos Memnon, and Poseidon Kyknos, and Thetis Achilles: [53] it was the opinion of the gods that it was more honourable for them to die fighting on behalf of Zeus' daughter than to live, and not take part in the dangers on her account. And why should one be surprised that this was their firm decision concerning their children? They themselves took part in a far greater and more terrible battle than the one against the Giants: against them they fought united, but on behalf of that woman they fought each other.

VI [54] With good reason they came to that decision, and indeed I am able to use extravagant statements concerning her: for beauty, the most august, the most precious, and the most divine of all that exists, she possessed more than anything else. It is easy to see beauty's power: of the things lacking courage or wisdom or justice many are more highly valued than any of these three separately; but of the things lacking beauty we will find none that is desired: no, they are all despised except in so far as they share in that quality. And virtue is held in highest esteem for the reason, that it is the most beautiful of habits. [55] One can see how far superior beauty is to all existing things from our attitudes towards each of these. All other things, which we need, we only want to have, but we feel no further affection for them in our soul; for what is beautiful, however, we have an inborn desire, to the same degree stronger than our will as beauty is superior.



[56] *Towards those who surpass us in intelligence or in other respects we feel jealousy, unless by daily benefits they win us over and force us to show affection; but towards the beautiful we immediately feel goodwill, and for them alone we never grow tired to do service, just as for the gods. [57] We prefer to be slaves to the beautiful rather than to rule over others, and we are more grateful when they impose many tasks on us than when they give us no orders. And those who are under some other power we criticize and call flatterers, but those who serve beauty we consider to be lovers of beauty and of enterprise.*

[58] *We show such reverence and consideration to this quality that we hold those possessors of beauty who make a profit from it and who are ill advised concerning their own youth more in contempt than the ones who violate other persons; but those who guard their flower of youth and keep it untouched by the perverted like a holy temple, we honour for all times as highly as benefactors of the whole city.*

[59] *But why should I spend time repeating human opinions? No, Zeus the all-mighty who reveals his power in everything else, considers it just to approach beauty humbly. For he came to Alkmene in the guise of Amphitryon, united with Danae as a golden stream, took refuge in the arms of Nemesis in the form of a swan, and took Leda for his bride again in the same disguise. Evidently it is always by stratagem and not by force that he pursues this kind of endowment. [60] And so much greater is the esteem paid to beauty by the gods than by us, that they show understanding when their wives are overcome by it; one could cite many cases of goddesses who fell victim to a mortal's beauty, but none of them tried to conceal what had happened as if it were a disgrace: no, they preferred their acts to be celebrated in hymns as beautiful deeds rather than keep them untold. The greatest proof of what I say is this: we will find more mortals owing their immortality to beauty than to all other excellences.*

VII [61] *To all these Helen was superior to the same degree as she surpassed them in outward looks. Not only did she become immortal herself, but after she acquired godlike power she first elevated her brothers, who were already in the grip of destiny, to the gods. And in her desire to make this change acceptable, she bestowed on them conspicuous honours: their appearance will rescue those who are in peril at sea, provided they invoke them piously.*

[62] *Next she showed much gratitude towards Menelaos for all the toils and perils he undertook on her behalf: while the whole house of Pelops had perished or had fallen victim to calamities beyond remedy, she not only protected him from these misfortunes but also changed him from mortal to god, and made him her husband*

and consort for all time to come [63] And as a witness for this I can refer to the city of the Spartans, which preserves ancient tradition with great care for even now in the Laconian city of Therapnae they offer holy and traditional sacrifices to them both, not as to heroes but as to gods

[64] Also to the poet Stesichorus Helen proved her power when he had slandered her in the opening of his ode, he was deprived of his eye-sight, but when he understood the reason for this misfortune and composed the so-called Palinode, she restored him to his normal state [65] And some Homeridae say that she came to Homer by night and ordered him to compose a poem on the participants in the expedition against Troy, because she wished to make their deaths more enviable than the life of others They also say that partly because of Homer's skill, but mostly because of her, the poem became so full of charm and renowned among all

[66] Thus, because she has the power to punish as well as to reward, it is the duty of the wealthy to appease and honour her with offerings, sacrifices and other ceremonies, and of the philosophers to speak about her in a way worthy of her qualities for such are the tributes it befits the learned to offer

VIII [67] What has been omitted exceeds by far what has been said For apart from the skills, intellectual pursuits, and other useful matters the origin of which may be attributed to her and to the Trojan war, we may justly consider Helen the reason that we are not the slaves of the barbarians For we will find that the Hellenes became of one mind because of her, and joined in a common expedition against the barbarians and that for the first time Europe erected a victory monument over Asia [68] In consequence we experienced great change formerly those who encountered misfortune amongst the barbarians considered it right to rule over cities of the Hellenes, like Danaos who fled from Egypt and occupied Argos, and Kadmos from Sidon who became king of Thebes, and the Carians who colonized the islands, and Pelops, the son of Tantalos, who conquered the whole of the Peloponnese But ever since that war our race expanded so much that it took large cities and much territory from the barbarians [69] If anyone wishes to develop these matters and enlarge on them, they will not be at a loss to find a starting point to praise Helen apart from what has been said no, they will encounter many and new arguments concerning her

### 5.3. Previous interpretations of Isocrates' *Helen*.

Modern scholarship on the *Helen* of Isocrates is rather short. Most older interpreters have expressed the view that this is a piece intended by Isocrates to show his virtuosity as a rhetorician. This would make the discourse nothing more than an example of the potentialities of rhetoric as a formal art.<sup>17</sup>

More recently the discourse has been the object of renewed study. Kennedy (1958) tried to show that the *Helen* is essentially a political document, and that it illustrates Isocrates' tendency to advocate Panhellenism. This interpretation is based on an analysis of 49-53 (the section on the Trojan War) and 67-69 (the conclusion), in which Isocrates refers to the Panhellenistic programme. This interpretation fails, however, to take into consideration in what way these sections fit in with the main subject of the discourse as a whole. As will be seen in the commentary below, the Panhellenistic theme is a functional motif and subordinate to the main theme, rather than the discourse's main subject.

Buchheit (1960) studied the *Helen* as an example of epideictic and was primarily interested in establishing its place in the development of that particular genre. He offered a comparison between Isocrates and Gorgias and, after the juxtaposition of a number of phrases from both discourses, concluded that Isocrates was "ein regelrechter Abschreiber", whose attempt at epideictic should be considered a failure. Buchheit's study is rather superficial, however, and shows little interest in close analysis of Isocrates' work and its structures. His interpretation is therefore insufficiently substantiated.

Kennedy (1958) was answered by Heilbrunn (1977), who convincingly showed that the limited political interpretation was untenable. He also argued for a purely epideictic interpretation and characterized the discourse as a "sophistic-rhetorical document".

Braun (1982) offered a new comparison of Gorgias' and Isocrates' *Helen*. He studied the differences in the way *Helen* is represented by both authors and concluded that Isocrates in fact answered Gorgias.

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<sup>17</sup> Mathieu - Brémond (1963), 153 "l'*Hélène* est un discours d'apparat", Blass (1979), 246. "Jedenfalls wollte Isokrates ein rhetorisches Kunststück liefern, und nichts mehr als das"; see also Jebb (1876), 10, Norlin (1980), xxxi, Flacelière (1961), 14, LaRue - Van Hook (1968), 54.

Although his analysis of the relations between both discourses is thorough and takes the aspect of over-all rhetorical strategy into consideration, his view on Isocrates remained unsatisfactory. It is odd that he failed to take into account the significance of the sections 54-60, the eulogy on beauty, which is of essential importance to the discourse as a whole. He, too, adhered to the narrow interpretation of the *Helen* as a piece of epideictic writing similar to Gorgias' work: both are "sinnvoll nur als Schriften <zu> verstehen, die rhetorische Meisterschaft gerade am paradoxen und unernsten Gegenstand erweisen sollen" (174).

Eucken (1983) provided a careful reading and analysis with special reference to those elements in the discourse that may enable one to establish Isocrates' position in the polemic between intellectual and philosophic movements at the time. He shows himself alert to the subtleties of Isocrates' thought and phrasing, but, because his interest is primarily on questions of doxography and identification of Isocrates' rivals, he pays less attention to the rhetorical features of the discourse.

Poulakos (1986) was the first to attempt a comprehensive interpretation of the *Helen*, in which the problem of the seeming incompatibility of the proemium and main text is seriously addressed. He correctly maintains that there is thematic coherence between both, and that the discourse as a whole is unified in structure, purpose and meaning. The proemium contains a claim to superiority over rivals in rhetorical education, and the main text illustrates that claim. Thus the *Helen* can be viewed as a programmatic composition inviting pupils to study Isocratean rhetoric, a piece of serious epideictic discourse, and an argument for the superior status of Isocratean education in contrast to the doctrines and practices of other educators. Poulakos' interpretation seems to be substantially correct, but does not address all the relevant issues. As a programmatic discourse, the *Helen* is also intended as an exemplary product of Isocratean rhetorical theory and technique. Since these technical questions are not incorporated in his approach, Poulakos' interpretation remains incomplete.

#### 5.4. Commentary

##### - section 1: prooemium (1-15)

The prooemium as a whole has a polemic character. Isocrates identifies groups of rivals in the field of education, and criticizes their programme. To this criticism he immediately adds his own point of view, and presents the principles of his own programme of education. Given these features the prooemium presents itself as an ἐπάγγελμα or manifesto. In this respect it is similar to *Against the Sophists*.

The argument in 1-15 is presented in three distinct stages. The first (1-5) introduces the main subject: education. Then (6-13), within this general context, the issue is narrowed down to the correct instrument to be used in education: the πολιτικός λόγος or “politically relevant discourse”. Finally (14-15) the main text, an encomium on Helen, is announced as an example of politically relevant discourse. Thus the argument moves from the general to the specific, in a rhythmical pattern in which the views and practices of Isocrates’ opponents views and those of his own are alternated.

#### I. education

1 εἰσὶ τινες οἷ: the opening phrase (εἰσὶ τινες followed by a relative sentence) is similar to those of the Hippocratic treatises *Περὶ τεχνῆς* (VI, 2-26 Littré) and *Περὶ φύσων* (VI, 90-115 Littré). Since these treatises show clear rhetorical features in general, and since their opening sections are polemical, this similarity suggests that the opening phrase reflects a conventional procedure used in this kind of texts.<sup>18</sup>

1 οἱ μέγα...δυναμένας: Isocrates distinguishes between three groups of rivals on the basis of their tenets or philosophical beliefs (δόξαι). The organisation in clusters according to δόξαι seems to have been an accepted procedure for producing inventories of intellectual

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<sup>18</sup> Jouanna (1984), 26-44, esp. 35.

movements before Aristotle. In this respect, also, there is similarity with some Hippocratic writings.<sup>19</sup>

The first cluster is probably that of Antisthenes and the Cynics; the second Plato and the Academy (the Socratics); the third the practitioners of casuistic refutation, who exploit verbal ambiguities and master clever debating skills: Euthydemus and Dionysiodorus, as they are portrayed in Plato's *Euthydemus*, seem to be examples of this movement. For further discussion of the possible identification of these clusters see Eucken (1983), 44-73.

2-4 ἐγὼ δέ...διατρίβουσιν: in a self-assertive way Isocrates marks the counter-attack. He argues that his opponents' doctrines are not original (§ 3) and that, although their predecessors made it clear that one can easily give an untrue account (ψευδῆ λόγον) on any subject, they continue to do just that (§ 4). This state of affairs is countered: Isocrates refers to the fact that his own works are indeed innovative (καινός, see § 13) and that they have the quality of ἀλήθεια or "truth". This quality is claimed as a property of his φιλοσοφία implicitly in this preamble (§ 4-5) and explicitly in XII, 260 (in which passage it is made clear that the qualification of "truth" is dependent upon an evident conformity to reality as perceived by the senses).<sup>20</sup> The last point, the quality of truthfulness, receives emphasis by being put first, immediately following the point of criticism last mentioned.

4-5 οὗς ἐχρῆν...ὠφελοῦσιν: here Isocrates presents the essence of his view on education. The sentence contains the fundamental elements of his concept of φιλοσοφία, each of which is referred to by (a) key-word(s):

- the pursuit of truth (ἀλήθεια)
- the education of pupils in "politics", i.e. all matters relevant to life in the πόλις (περὶ τὰς πράξεις ἐν αἷς πολιτευόμεθα τοὺς συνόντας παιδεύειν)
- training and practice as an integral part of education (περὶ τὴν ἐμπειρίαν τὴν τούτων γυμνάζειν)

<sup>19</sup> See Mansfeld (1990), 22-83, esp. 23 f., 55-59.

<sup>20</sup> See Steidle (1952), 261-2, Mikkola (1954), 87-90, Mansfeld (1995), 228 & n. 22 (on the distinction between truth and opinion), on the counter-intuitive character of theses put forward by philosophers in order to arouse admiration and curiosity see Tarrant (1996), 135, on Isocrates' similar use of paradox, see below, p. 159-160.

- the priority of possessing opinion on useful issues over having exact knowledge on useless ones (κρεῖττόν ἐστι περὶ τῶν χρησίμων ἐπεικῶς δοξάζειν ἢ περὶ τῶν ἀχρήστων ἀκριβῶς ἐπίστασθαι)

- concentration on what is important and useful for living (τοῖς μεγάλοις...καὶ τοῖς πρὸς τὸν βίον ὠφελοῦσιν).

Cf. XII, 28-30; XV, 184-5; 266-271 for an elaborate presentation of Isocrates' φιλοσοφία. His doctrine consists of a practical philosophy of life for a member of his πόλις. This provides the general frame of the discourse: education should be concerned with subjects which are useful and valuable to life.

This stance implies that Isocrates' intention is a serious. As the proemium is a preamble to an epideictic main text, this means that he considers epideictic rhetoric, if correctly approached, a serious genre (see below).

## II. the educator's instrument: the πολιτικὸς λόγος

6-7 ἀλλὰ γὰρ...βλάπτουσιν: after defining education and its ends in the first subsection, Isocrates lets this general point rest and turns to a new topic: the instruments of education. His opponents abuse the character of the young to serve their purpose of self-interest. What they offer to them is out of the ordinary and elicits wonder, and that is exactly what attracts the young mind. Therefore it is the conduct of the teachers that is to be reprehended: in their methods they do not contribute to a useful education, but only satisfy the young's interest in the power of argument as such.<sup>21</sup> In stead of being useful to their students, they do them harm.

8 τοσοῦτον δέ...εὐπορήσουσιν: the second point (δέ) of criticism is on the content of their writings. They are remote from reality (ψευδολογεῖν, see above), but they bring advantage to their authors. This circumstance stimulates the production of more discourses in which paradoxical themes are defended, e.g. the enviability of the life of beggars and exiles. It may be that the argument in these discourses was

<sup>21</sup> Cf. XIII, 16 and Ch III, 80 f., for the attitudes of the young cf. Aristotle *Rh* II, 12, 1389 a 12-14. καὶ φιλότιμοι μὲν εἰσι, μᾶλλον δὲ φιλόνοικοι· ὑπεροχῆς γὰρ ἐπιθυμεῖ ἡ νεότης, ἥ δὲ νίκη ὑπεροχῇ τις, cf. 1389 a 34-36

based on the fallacy that as beggars sing and dance in temple precincts and exiles can live where they want, they must be happy because such things are true of people who seem to be happy. This way of fallacious reasoning is used by Aristotle as an example of the fallacy *παρὰ τὸ ἐπόμενον* (*Rh.* II,24, 1401 b 20-29).

Their ability to write such discourses they adduce as proof (*τεκμήριον*) that if they are able to speak (*ἔχουσι τι λέγειν*) on a base subject, they will have an abundance of arguments (*εὐπορήσουσιν*) on noble subjects. This argument is refuted in 11, below.

9-10 *ἐμοὶ δὲ δοκεῖ...ἐπιχειρήσειεν*: Isocrates' counter-attack is opened, as in 2, with an emphatic self-reference. His argument is based on the enthymematic consideration that if his opponents would possess *πολιτικὴ ἐπιστήμη*, as they claim they do, they would show proof of this in their manifestoes. This they evidently do not, as Isocrates showed before, which leads to the - unexpressed - conclusion that they lack what they claim to possess.

The point made enables Isocrates to present his doctrine of exemplariness: the good teacher must show himself superior in wisdom and thus provide an example to be imitated and followed by his pupils. Cf. XIII,18: the teacher should τοιοῦτον αὐτὸν παράδειγμα παρασχεῖν ὥστε τοὺς ἐκτιπωθέντας καὶ μιμήσασθαι δυναμένους εὐθὺς ἀνθρότερον καὶ χαρίεστερον τῶν ἄλλων φαίνεσθαι λέγοντας. Cf. XV, 206, 278.

A comparison of his opponents to athletes who enter a contest where they will meet no competition concludes the argument with respect to the discourses with useless themes and anticipates the next point: the difficulty of writing valuable discourse.

11-13 *ἀλλὰ δῆλον...ἴδιόν ἐστιν*: discourses as produced by his opponents are simple products. But discourses on subjects that are of communal interest and are trustworthy (*κοινοὶ καὶ πιστοί*) constitute a higher literary level. They are "more difficult" (*χαλεπωτέραν ἔχουσι τὴν σύνθεσιν*), because effort and seriousness are required. On the technical aspects see Ch. II, p. 27 f. and III, p. 81 f.

This claim is substantiated by arguing that writing a discourse praising (*ἐπαινεῖν*) petty subjects like praising bumble-bees or salt, is easy and offers an abundance of material, but it is very difficult to do justice to



the potential of noble subjects. This argument reverses those used by his opponents in 8. Here the subjects of λόγοι κοινοὶ καὶ πιστοὶ are specified: they are what is generally recognized as good and noble, and what is morally superior (περὶ τῶν ὁμολογουμένων ἀγαθῶν ἢ καλῶν ἢ τῶν διαφερόντων ἐπ' ἀρετῇ). These subjects are further (13) characterized as having μέγεθος and δόξα.

An advanced level in literature also requires a different state of mind: if one wishes to do justice to the subject (ἀξίως εἰπεῖν, a key-word of Isocratean theory of discourse: see above), this will involve a determination to overcome difficulty.

The topic of difficulty might also serve as an indirect form of advertisement: the insistence on his type of discourse as representing an advanced level implies that his audience, his prospective pupils, are challenged as competent arbiters.<sup>22</sup>

In Isocrates' view, then, the encomium should be considered serious literature. On this point he parts with most sophists, who practised the paradoxical encomium for display reasons. In its serious purpose, however, the prose encomium seems to be heir to the tradition of protreptic poetry.<sup>23</sup> Isocrates himself explicitly positions himself in this poetic tradition: see IX, 8-11 and XV, 166. As can be inferred from Plato *Symp.* 198 b - 199 b and 215 a, there existed rules for serious encomiastic writing, which claimed to be directed towards "truth".<sup>24</sup>

12 τῶν μὲν γὰρ...βουλῆθεντων ἐπαινεῖν: according to Bury (1932, xx-xxi) this is probably a reference to Antisthenes, rather than to Polycrates. Cf. Plato *Symp.* 177 b 5-7 ἔγωγε ἤδη τινὶ ἐνέτυχον βιβλίῳ ἀνδρὸς σοφοῦ, ἐν ᾧ ἐνῆσαν ἅλεις ἐπαινον θαυμάσιον ἔχοντες πρὸς ὠφέλειαν. It seems, then, that Isocrates and Plato agree in their rejection of Antisthenes. If this is correct, this passage may be further evidence that there is more common ground between Isocrates and Plato than generally acknowledged (see Ch. II on δόξα, p. 35 f., 85-86 and Ch. III on synthetic concept of rhetoric).

<sup>22</sup> Gillis (1969), 336-7.

<sup>23</sup> See Ch. I, § 3, the hymn might be one of its literary pedigrees: this is suggested in Pericles' Funeral Speech, where the ἐπαινος is referred to as ὕμνος (Th II, 42, 2).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. XI, 4, Plato *Menex.* 234 c; see Rademacher (1951), 174, 223 & n.52; Rutherford (1995), 203-204, Bons (1996), 30-33.

13 ἴδιον: the word used by Isocrates to indicate originality. Cf. V,110: the intellectual excellences of Heracles are material for praise and have not as yet been treated by anyone. Therefore they constitute a τόπος ἴδιος καὶ πανταπᾶσιν ἀδιεξέργαστον. See Ch. IV, 32 f. Cf. also Gorgias *Hel.* 9: ἐπ' ἄλλοτρίων τε πραγμάτων καὶ σωμάτων εὐτυχίας καὶ δυσπραγίας ἴδιόν τι πάθημα διὰ τῶν λόγων ἔπαθεν ἡ ψυχή.

### 3. Helen as a suitable subject for good discourse

14 διὸ καί...διήνεγκεν: the third subsection is closely connected to what precedes. Having established the advanced status of laudatory discourse on noble subjects in subsection 2, Isocrates now introduces a specific example of such a subject. It is a suitable subject because she was a woman who was superior in descendance, beauty and fame: thus she answers to the criteria of § 12 (see above).

14 τὸν γράψαντα περὶ τῆς Ἑλένης: the selection of Helen as a subject of laudatory discourse (τῶν εὖ λέγειν τι βουλευθέντων) is approved by Isocrates. Two points can be made:

(1) The author responsible for this discourse remains unnamed, but it seems reasonable to assume that he was a figure well-known to the audience. More information on the discourse written by him can be gained from what follows:

- the work was entitled Περὶ Ἑλένης<sup>25</sup>
- the work was presented by its author as an encomium (φησὶ μὲν γὰρ ἐγκώμιον γεγραφέναι περὶ αὐτῆς);
- the work was of apologetic character and consisted of a defense of her deeds (τυγχάνει δ' ἀπολογίαν εἰρηκῶς ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐκείνη πεπραγμένων).

Given these considerations (the selection of Helen as subject; the professed laudatory intention; the apologetic character) it seems probable that Isocrates is referring to Gorgias' *Helen*.<sup>26</sup> This conclusion, however, is not a necessary one, if one takes the following into consideration:

- (a) the phrase itself and the context of the preamble suggest that Isocrates has a contemporary writer in mind;

<sup>25</sup> See Schmalzriedt (1970); cf. the phrase γράφειν περὶ τινος referring to certain published works in V,10, XII,85,172,173, cf. XV,13.

<sup>26</sup> A synthesis of the question of the identification of this anonymous writer is offered by Braun (1982), 158-160, who himself decides in favour of Gorgias

(b) the proemium of Isocrates' *Busiris* is also a critique of a rival author there it is Polycrates, who is censured for pretending to have written a defense of Busiris (4 Βουσίριδος ἀπολογία, 5 ἀπολογήσασθαι φάσκων), which, however, has had the reverse effect of adding to the Egyptian tyrant's bad reputation There, as here, the critique consists of pointing out that the rival author has failed to observe the generic rules or conventions of laudatory discourse, and secondly, the critique on a matter of literary principle is followed by an example of generically correct discourse The similarity suggests that also in the case of *Helen* a recent, but generically defective discourse on the same subject has prompted Isocrates to write his version,

(c) it is probable that not only Gorgias, but also other authors wrote on the subject of Helen, since that appears to be a much used theme in literature see, e.g., Ar. *Thesm* 850 τὴν καινὴν Ἑλένην μιμήσομαι<sup>27</sup> and see above (§ 5.1),

These considerations leave room for the possibility that a representative of the rival school, where unserious discourse is taught (see on subsection 2, above), had recently published a virtuoso piece on Helen, exemplifying the rhetorical capabilities to be learned there This representative might even have been the same Polycrates criticized in the *Busiris* His activity as an author is characterized by Demetrius as follows ἐπαίξεν γάρ, οὐκ ἐσπούδαζεν (*De eloc* 120) To consider this as a possibility is justified by the parallel case of the unnamed author in the account of Socrates' banquet with Agathon and Alcibiades in the preface of Plato's *Symposium* The ἄλλος τις mentioned there (172 b 2) cannot be identified with certainty, but might be Polycrates of Samos, the rhetor from what is known about his literary activity, it seems defensible to attribute an attack against Socrates through the composition of a work containing the description of a banquet-scene to him<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, the procedure of polemic in the proemium, which is typical of the way in which fourth-century intellectual movements attacked each other<sup>29</sup>, can support this hypothesis

(2) The choice of Helen is in keeping with the paradoxical character of the discourse With regard to this it should be remembered that encomia

<sup>27</sup> See Kannicht (1969) I 21 26, maybe Anstophanes is here referring to Stesichorus' *Palinode* see above p. 6 & n. 9

<sup>28</sup> See Bury (1932) xvii xix

<sup>29</sup> See Owen (1983), 19 f

on (par)adoxical<sup>30</sup> themes could very well have a serious, and especially edifying or educational intent. As evidence for the existence of a continuing tradition of such literary works since the time of the sophists one can adduce Aulus Gellius *N.A.* XVII,12,1:

*Infames materias, sive quis mavult dicere "inopinabiles", quas Graeci ἀδόξους ὑποθέσεις appellant, et veteres adorti sunt, non sophistae solum, sed philosophi quoque et noster Favorinus (...) vel ingenio expurgificando ratus idoneas vel exercendis argutiis vel edomandis usu difficultatibus.*

In the case of Helen as a subject of such a discourse, in which her beauty and its positive stimulating effect is a central theme, the element of surprise seems to be consciously sought for by Isocrates. As a rule, the positive thematisation of beauty occurred in connection with men: a manly appearance and good looks were considered an asset. As the cases of Pandora and Helen show, beauty in a woman can be used for the very negative interpretation of its destructive power.<sup>31</sup> By choosing Helen as a positive model Isocrates enhances the paradox. In doing so he plays on the effect of the unexpected, and secures attention in the audience (see also p. 125 n. 65).

15 ἵνα δὲ μὴ δοκῶ...εἰρημένα: distancing himself from his rivals once again, Isocrates declines to take an easy way, and presents a laudatory discourse on Helen of his own. This will be an example of innovation (καινότης, see XIII,12: οὗτος εἶναι δοκεῖ τεχνικώτατος ὅς τις ἂν (...) μηδὲν δὲ τῶν αὐτῶν τοῖς ἄλλοις εὐρίσκειν δύνηται).

15 ἀπολογεῖσθαι...ἐπαινεῖν: the precision of terminology might reflect influence on Isocrates by Prodicus, whose preference for ὀρθότης ὀνομάτων is well-known (see Plato, *Euthyd.* 277 e 4: πρῶτον γάρ, ὥς φησι Πρόδικος, περὶ ὀνομάτων ὀρθότητος μαθεῖν δεῖ; cf. Arist. *Top.* 112 b 21).

<sup>30</sup> On Menander Rhetor's classification of encomia see now Van der Poel (1996), 204-213, who convincingly argues that *paradoxa* and *adoxia* constitute one category. *paradoxon* is a qualification of the theme from the point of view of the audience, *adoxon* from the point of view of the subject's nature

<sup>31</sup> See Hall (1995), 51-52. On the cultivation of male beauty see also below on §§ 54-60; on male beauty-contests cf. Arist. *Ath Pol.* 60,5, [Andoc.] IV, 42, Athenaeus *Deipn.* 565 f.; cf. also the ironic beauty contest between Socrates and the handsome young Critobulus in Xen. *Symp.* 5, see Guthrie (1969), 387-388

A further example of terminological distinction in Isocrates is IV, 130: *χρή δὲ κατηγορεῖν μὲν ἡγεῖσθαι τοὺς ἐπὶ βλάβῃ τοιαῦτα λέγοντας, νουθετεῖν δὲ τοὺς ἐπ' ὠφελείᾳ λοιδοροῦντας. τὸν γὰρ αὐτὸν λόγον οὐχ ὁμοίως ὑπολαμβάνειν δεῖ μετὰ τῆς αὐτῆς διανοίας λεγόμενον.*

Cf. Radermacher (1951), 68-69 *ad* Prodicus B VIII, 10-11.

The proemium as a whole suggests the following to its audience:

1. the discourse on Helen shall be all that his rivals' works are not: it will be a piece of serious and politically relevant discourse, with educational purpose;
2. it will exemplify the state of mind, which will result from the education in Isocrates' school;
3. it will offer an innovative treatment of the Helen-theme.

In every respect the discourse will prove to be programmatic. In agreement with his ideas on the means of education Isocrates will offer a text which exemplifies both technical conventions and rules of rhetoric, and the moral doctrine of his school.<sup>32</sup> The proem as such fulfills its main function, as identified in rhetorical theory, of securing the audience's attention and announcing the subject (*Anax. Ars Rhet.* 29,1, 1436 a 33-40; *Arist. Rh.* III, 14, 1414 b 17 f.).

The analysis of the main text (16 f.) will show that the implicit announcement is indeed carried out. There is, therefore, no reason to assume that the discourse as a whole lacks in unity. To refer to Aristotle *Rh.* III, 14, 1414 b 27-29 in support of the view that the *Helen* is not unified in the sense that proemium and main text are not connected, is unjustified.<sup>33</sup> Aristotle's remark that "there is nothing in common between the eristics and Helen" (*οὐθεν γὰρ οἰκεῖον ὑπάρχει τοῖς ἐριστικοῖς καὶ Ἑλένῃ*) indicates that there is a difference in material or subject-matter<sup>34</sup> between proemium and main text, but from what follows it is clear that he does not mean that the discourse itself can no longer be regarded as a whole: *ἅμα δὲ καὶ ἐὰν ἐκτοπίσῃ, ἀρμόττει μὴ ὅλον τὸν λόγον ὁμοειδῆ εἶναι.* The point here is avoidance of uniformity.

<sup>32</sup> On the use of model speeches in education see Ch. I, § 3.

<sup>33</sup> See Poulakos (1986), 3-4 for a discussion of interpretations in this vein by Jebb, Norlin, Howland and Jaeger. Kennedy (1958) challenges these interpretations

<sup>34</sup> For *ὑπάρχειν* referring to the subject-matter of a text see *Rh.* II, 22, 1396 b 8 f (*τὰ ὑπάρχοντα* as "topics", see Grimaldi (1988), 286 *ad loc.*).

**- section 2: Helen's birth and parentage (16-17)**

16 μὲν οὖν: marks an incision in the narrative the particle combination indicates both that the precedent section concludes and that a new section opens <sup>35</sup> In this instance it signifies a transition from the introductory section 1 (chs 1-15) to the beginning of the main text, and underlines the explicit announcement τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ λόγου ποιήσομαι In this way Isocrates achieves integration of the sections of the discourse the introduction and the main text are thus closely connected (see also on 16 and 22, below)

16 τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ γένους αὐτῆς: treatment of the *laudandus*' descendancy is a conventional element of the encomium, to be placed at the beginning Cf the γένος-sections in the *Euagoras* and the *Busiris*, also placed immediately after the introductory section

- IX,12 πρῶτον μὲν οὖν περὶ τῆς φύσεως τῆς Εὐαγόρου καὶ τίνων ἦν ἀπόγονος δοκεῖ μοι πρέπειν διελθεῖν

- XI,10 περὶ μὲν οὖν τῆς Βουσίριδος εὐγενείας τίς οὐκ ἂν δυνηθεῖτ ῥαδίως εἰπεῖν

16 ὑπὸ Διὸς...κληθῆναι: stresses the particular affection of Zeus towards Helen, an affection which singles her out as a woman of special importance A long list of demigods and their mothers is provided by Zeus himself in Hom XIV, 315-328

16 σπουδάσας...πέφυκεν: confirms Helen's singular position by addition (δέ) of a σύγκρισις between herself and Heracles The first element of this comparison is concerned with their individual singular qualities Both are endowed by a special gift Heracles by strength (ἰσχύς), Helen by beauty (κάλλος) But Helen's gift is superior, because beauty has the natural capacity of subjecting even strength to itself Here κάλλος is mentioned for the first time it will return frequently in what follows and is clearly a central motif of the speech as a whole

<sup>35</sup> See Sickung & van Ophuijsen (1993), 27 28, 48-49

17 εἰδὼς δὲ...ἐποίησεν: constitutes the second element of the comparison between Helen and Heracles: their status, both among the gods and among mankind. They are both exalted (ἀναγαγεῖν) to divine position in heaven and leave behind on earth (καταλιπεῖν) their everlasting glory. Both constituents of their status are presented in their complementary function by the antithesis ἀναγαγεῖν - καταλιπεῖν, making use of effective *pariosis* and *homoiooteleuton*.

17 τὰς δόξας ἀειμνήστους: the epic atmosphere, that was already implicitly evoked in c.16 by referring to the demigods and their descendancy from Zeus, is here made explicit. The phrase "glory that will always be remembered" is reminiscent of the Homeric κλέος ἄφθιτον (see e.g. Hom. IX, 413; IX, 189-191: κλέα ἀνδρῶν). As the epics of Homer have a function in preserving the heroism of the past, so is it the function of the encomium to preserve virtue. Cf. the programmatic statement in the *Euagoras* :

- IX,4: ὁ δὲ λόγος εἰ καλῶς διέλθοι τὰς ἐκείνου (sc. Euagoras') πράξεις, ἀειμνήστον ἂν τὴν ἀρετὴν τὴν Εὐαγόρου παρὰ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ποιήσειεν. Celebration is a function shared by epic poetry and encomiastic writing.<sup>36</sup>

17 ἐπίπονον...περιμάχητον: the use of compound words (διπλᾶ ὀνόματα) is considered by Aristotle (*Rh.* III, 1408 b 11 f.) to be especially appropriate for the "emotional speaker": τὰ δὲ ὀνόματα τὰ διπλᾶ...μάλιστα ἀρμόττει λέγοντι παθητικῶς. Except when the speaker is in a state of anger, this rule applies καὶ ὅταν ἔχη ἤδη τοὺς ἀκροατὰς καὶ ποιήσῃ ἐνθουσιάζειν ἢ ἐπαίνους ἢ ψόγους ἢ ὀργὴν ἢ φιλίαν "when he has a grip on his audience and causes them to be enthusiastic, either by praise or blame, or anger or friendliness". To this Aristotle adds that the emotional speaker will be sympathetically received by his audience, and that this style is appropriate to poetry, because poetry is something inspired (ἐνθεον γὰρ ἡ ποιήσις, cf. 1406 b 1 f.). The use of the language of emotion with its resounding compound words, a feature of the grand style<sup>37</sup>, serves to support the statement about Helen's nature by creating an atmosphere of

<sup>36</sup> See Nagy (1989), 8-18 (who points to the same element in Pindar and the proem to Herodotus' *Histories*).

<sup>37</sup> See O'Sullivan (1992), 36-38.

impressiveness. It seems that the admiration for Helen is reflected in the grand poetic style adopted here. Thus Isocrates chooses his phraseology according to his own rules on appropriateness (see Ch. III, p. 91 f.), and does what Aristotle prescribes in *Rh.* III, 1408 a 18 in his treatment of *πρέπον* in λέξεις: to speak on praiseworthy themes with admiration (λέγειν, ἐὰν δὲ ἐπαινετὰ, ἀγαμένως).

Assessing the intended effect of this "poetic" opening section of the main text one might compare Plato *Symposium* 198 a 1-2, where the reactions of the symposiasts to the laudatory speech on Eros by Agathon are described. Agathon's speech has stylistic features similar to this section in Isocrates. Since Agathon's speech in the *Symposium* is intended as an imitation, albeit it an ironic one, of the abundant poetic style of Gorgias<sup>38</sup>, the reactions to it might be an indication of the appreciation for the "gorgianic" style:

εἰπόντος δὲ τοῦ Ἀγάθωνος πάντας ἔφη ὁ Ἀριστόδημος ἀναθορυβῆσαι τοὺς παρόντας, ὡς πρεπόντως τοῦ νεανίσκου εἰρηκότος καὶ αὐτῷ καὶ τῷ θεῷ.

("After Agathon had finished, Aristodemus said, all present loudly applauded, because the young man had spoken in a manner suited to himself and to the god.")

Similarly, then, the poetic opening section in reflecting Helen's status by its grand style might have received a favourable reaction<sup>39</sup> in the audience.

**17 περιμάχητον:** (1) the same compound adjective is used in connection with Helen and the phantom-motive by Plato *Resp.* IX, 586 c 4-5: τὸ τῆς Ἑλένης εἶδωλον ὑπὸ τῶν ἐν Τροίᾳ Στησίχορος φησι γενέσθαι περιμάχητον ἀγοία τοῦ ἀληθοῦς. The explicit reference to Stesichorus and the poetical quality of the adjective itself (see above) suggests that *perimāxhton* is an allusion to Stesichorus' *Palinode*.

(2) In his list of things considered a good (ἀγαθόν), which is part of the treatment of subjects of deliberative discourse, Aristotle refers to (1363 a 8 f.) "that which many aim at and which is manifestly an object

<sup>38</sup> On the Gorgianic features of Agathon's speech see Dover (1980), 123; Eucken (1983), 107-114.

<sup>39</sup> On (ἀνα)θορυβῆσαι as referring to the applause granted to a successful speaker see Bury (1932), 84; see also V. Bers, "Dikastic *Thorubos*", in: P.A. Cartledge - F.D. Harvey, *Crux. Essays in Greek History presented to G.E.M. de Ste. Croix on his 75th birthday*, London 1985, 1-15.



of contention": οὗ πολλοὶ ἐφίενται καὶ το περιμάχητον φαινόμενον. In *EN* 1168 b 18-19 τὰ περιμάχητα are the things which men consider to be best, and in 1169 a 21 highly prized goods are called τὰ περιμάχητα ἀγαθὰ. This usage is similar to the sense here. The thought might be entertained that in constructing his list of topical "goods", Aristotle had this passage in mind.

### - section 3: Theseus (18-38)

The section on Theseus can be divided as follows:

1. 18-20: Theseus abductor of Helen
2. 21-22: general characterisation of Theseus
3. 23-28: comparison Theseus - Heracles
4. 29-30: transition
5. 31-37: Theseus founder of Athenian culture and society
6. 38: conclusion

#### 1. 18-20: Theseus first abductor of Helen

18-20 καὶ πρῶτον...συνεκινδύνευσεν: the episode of Helen's abduction by Theseus and Peirithous is given in one sentence of exceptional length. Similarly, in §§ 41-43 the episode of Paris' choice is presented in one long sentence. It seems that Isocrates is here presenting a specimen of his virtuosity as a speech-maker: utilizing the linguistic potentials of the period, and gorgianic figures as means of semantic demarcation of information-units by sound effect, he is able to construct an intricate sentence with a clear articulation in subordinate clauses. Rhythm, balance, and assonance provide the framework in which the thought of the sentence is developed. In this way the sentence is constructed from periods and cola and remains linearly perceptible.<sup>40</sup> The exceptional length of the sentence may be explained as explorations of the limitation of periodical sentences by Isocrates.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> On the technique involved in a long sentence sustaining itself by utilizing "halts" or "rests" see Denniston (1952), 15, 60 f., see also Zucker (1963), 87-89.

<sup>41</sup> On the distinction sentence - period see Kennedy (1963), 110-111; for a discussion of the period as such see Schenkeveld (1964), 23-41; on experimentation by Isocrates see Usher (1973), 41-42.

The appreciation of this particular stylistic feature must take the manner in which these sentences were perceived into consideration. Isocrates himself explicitly mentions that his discourses were not meant to be orally performed as “spoken text”, but to be received (read or heard) as a specimen of written discourse. It is conceivable that in constructing such artificial long sentences Isocrates exploits to the fullest the possibilities of a recent innovation in literary composition: the production of written texts to be read.<sup>42</sup> As one can infer from what was said on § 16 above, such a display of stylistic virtuosity might be intended to impress the audience, or even elicit its explicit approval.

According to ancient literary critics this feature was reprehensible, because in its artificiality it was pushed to far. In his discussion of Isocrates' style Dionysius of Halicarnassus identifies this problem clearly:

ἡ δὲ λέξις (...) στρογγύλη δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν, ὥσπερ ἐκείνη (sc. the style of Lysias), καὶ συγκεκοτημένη καὶ πρὸς ἀγῶνας δικανικοὺς εὐθετος, ὑπέρτα δὲ ἐστὶ μάλλον καὶ κεχυμένη πλουσίως, οὐδὲ δὴ σύντομος οὕτως, ἀλλὰ καὶ κατασκευῆς καὶ βραδυτέρα τοῦ μετρίου.<sup>43</sup> (*De Isoc.* 2)

Isocrates' style is, according to Dionysius, periodic and rhythmical, and therefore more suited for reading than for practical usage: ἀναγνώσεως μάλλον οἰκειότερός ἐστιν ἢ χρήσεως. (*ibid.*) These discourses can best be appreciated by recitation (ἐπιδείξεις) or by private study (ἡ ἐκ χειρὸς θεωρία).

18 καὶ πρῶτον μὲν: the transition from section 1 to 2 is smooth: the opening of section 2 is clearly marked by καί, and the phrase περίβλεπτον καὶ περιμάχητον τὴν φύσιν is followed by the first example to prove the general point, made at the end of section 1: Theseus was the first to be overwhelmed by Helen's beauty, even though she was still a child at the time (cf. Plut. *Thes.* 31), and he is ready to challenge her family and all Spartan heroes in his attempt to abduct her (19).

18 λεγόμενος...γενόμενος: an allusion to and variation of Gorgias *Helen* 3, on Helen's parents: δῆλον γὰρ ὡς μητρός μὲν Λήδας, πατρός δὲ τοῦ

<sup>42</sup> See Ch I, § 4

<sup>43</sup> His style ( . . ) is not compact, like that one (sc. Lysias' style), and closely knit and suited for forensic speeches, but rather sprawling and overflowing with its own exuberance, and it is not so concise, but seems to drag its feet and move to slowly [tr. Usher, adapted]

μὲν γενομένου θεοῦ, λεγομένου δὲ θνητοῦ, Τυνδάρεω καὶ Διός. See Buchheit (1960), 59; also Ch. IV, 140 f. on καινότης as “variation”.

**18 ἡττήθη τοῦ κάλλους ὁ κρατεῖν τῶν ἄλλων εἰθισμένος:** Theseus provides the example of what was said in 16: beauty brings even strength into subjection, which in itself is capable of overpowering others.

**18-19 ὥσθ'...κατέθετο:** an elaborate treatment of the circumstances unfavourable to the execution of Theseus' plan to abduct Helen serves as a means to amplify (αὐξήσις) the effect of her beauty on him: against all odds he is resolved to have her as his companion.

**20 καὶ...συνεκινδύνευσεν:** illustrates Theseus' gratitude and loyalty to his friend Peirithous, who helped him in the abduction of Helen. Now that Peirithous undertakes to gain possession of Kore, he receives the help of Theseus. The analogous situation is reflected in the antithetical syntax of both kola (τοσοῦτον...κατέθετο / τοσαύτην...συνεκινδύνευσεν).

## 2. 21-22: Theseus qualified as judge

**21 εἰ μὲν οὖν...ἔστιν:** the transition to the next subsection is a logical nexus: Theseus' abduction of Helen was an act of violence (19: βία λαβὼν αὐτήν) which would evoke condemnation. If the abductor Theseus had been just anyone, the previous subsection could be interpreted, not as praise of Helen, but as an accusation of Theseus. This brings up the point to be treated next: how to evaluate Helen's abduction by Theseus.

**21-22 νῦν δὲ...ὄντας:** Theseus is not just anyone, but a man of particular distinction, superior to all other men of renown: these are each distinguished by a certain individual virtuous quality (courage, wisdom, etc.), but he possessed virtue in all respects. This observation serves as an answer to the indirect and unexpressed question on the interpretation of the previous subsection. At the same time it leads to a second point (δοκεῖ

δὲ): given Theseus' consummate virtue, it is appropriate to elaborate on him (καὶ διὰ μακροτέρων εἰπεῖν).

The insertion of further treatment of Theseus is explained and justified by Isocrates (ἡγοῦμαι γάρ) by reference to its function: it serves as an argument from authority. Those who wish to praise Helen have the highest guarantee (πίστιν), if it can be shown that those who loved and admired her, were themselves remarkable men.

On this argument from authority see Aristotle *Rh.* II, 1398 b 20 f., where it is part of the list of κοῖνοι τόποι (universally applicable models of argumentation: see Grimaldi (1988), 291-3 and 312-315 for the τόπος ἐκ κρίσεως). It is based on using the judgment of a person considered to be a trustworthy witness for or against the question under discussion. Isocrates' use of Theseus as an authoritative source for the reliability of the proposition that Helen is praiseworthy, is one of the examples used by Aristotle (1399 a 2 f.): καὶ περὶ τῆς Ἑλένης ὡς Ἰσοκράτης ἔγραψεν ὅτι σπουδαία, εἴπερ Θησεὺς ἔκρινεν.

**22 ὅσα μὲν γὰρ...φαίνεσθαι:** the use of the argument from authority is supported by a further methodological reflection on its validity. On contemporary issues one can reasonably judge by one's own opinions (δόξαις...διακρίνομεν), a statement based on Isocrates' expressed philosophical preference of δόξα to ἐπιστήμη (see on § 4-5, above). On issues from the past, however, one follows the opinion of intelligent men of that time, who are for that reason qualified as judges. This implies that one should also follow the criteria of evaluation of these men and, if need be, take distance from contemporary criteria. This argument returns at 45-47 and is further developed there. It reveals Isocrates' scientific attitude in dealing with arguments drawn from myth and history. (see below, on §§ 45-47).

The presence of such passages, where Isocrates reflects on matters of method, can be explained by the didactic intent his works have. The argument and the subsequent justification of its use exemplify his preferred didactic method and its theoretical basis *ad oculos* (see Ch. I, § 3).

### 3. 23-28. The Theseus/Heracles - σύγκρισις

23 **κάλλιστον...εἰπεῖν**: the smooth transition is similar to those in 16 and 21: μὲν οὖν marks the conclusion of what precedes (Theseus is a qualified judge, and therefore to elaborate on him is justified) and the beginning of the announced elaboration (§ 22: διὰ μακροτέρων εἰπεῖν). As elsewhere, an integration of the discourse's subsections and their adjustment to its main theme is what Isocrates aims at.

23 **Ἡρακλεῖ...ἐνάμιλλον**: the elaboration is made in the form of another comparison, now between Theseus and Heracles.<sup>44</sup> It has two separate parts: (1) 23-25: the comparison in the strict sense, which aims to prove Theseus' superiority over Heracles because of the universal utility of his exploits, and (2) 25-28: a catalogue of Theseus' exploits to prove the point.

Part (1) opens, in encomiastic tradition, with their similar divine parentage and ambitions (note the intentional effect of ἐξ ἀδελφῶν γεγονότες...ἀδελφὰς...ἐπιθυμίας ἔσχον): to be champions of human life. From 24 (συνέβη δὲ...) onwards, the difference between the two heroes is focused on, in order to achieve the comparison's aim: to prove Theseus' superiority. This is done by highlighting two distinguishing marks:

- Heracles' exploits are more famous and heroic, but Theseus' are more useful (ὠφελιμωτέρους) and more akin to the nature of the Hellenes (τοῖς Ἑλλήσιν οἰκειοτέρους<sup>45</sup>);
- for this statement Isocrates offers proof by referring to the fact that Heracles was (a) in essence a hero who served: τῷ (= Heracles) μὲν Εὐρυσθεὺς προσέταττεν, who (b) had no intention to benefit mankind, but who procured fame for himself by facing danger: οὐ τοὺς ἄλλους ὠφελήσεν ἀλλ' αὐτὸς κινδυνεύσειν. In support of this Isocrates mentions some of the labours Heracles undertook: to bring Geryon's cattle, to obtain the apples of the Hesperides, and to fetch Cerberus from Hades. All of these have no apparent use for humankind. Isocrates' selection seems intentional: by excluding labours that were a benefit for humankind (e.g. killing the lion of Nemea or the birds of lake

<sup>44</sup> See also Jakel (1986), 75-76, Eucken (1983), 95-101, who discusses the possibility of references to the philosophy of Anaximenes in this section. His qualification of this section as "Exkurs" seems inappropriate as he himself shows, the section is an integral part of the overall argument.

<sup>45</sup> For οἰκεῖος as referring to what is akin, as opposed to what is foreign, cf. IX,77 οὐκ ἀλλοτρίους παραδείγμασι χρώμενος ἀλλ' οἰκεῖους παρακαλῶ; V,17, XII,168, cf. LSJ s.v. III

Stymphale) he is able to underline his point: no examples to the contrary of what is stated are allowed. Thus the selection is conducive to attaining an rhetorical purpose, and serves as an example of the procedure of conscious in- and exclusion in the construction of an argument (cf. V, 109-112 for a different appraisal of Heracles' exploits; see also Ch. II, 31 f. and IV, 138 f.).

Theseus, however, is presented as (a) an autonomous hero: ὁ δ' αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ κύριος ὢν, in which capacity he conforms to the Athenian ideal of independence and sovereignty, and (b) as performing exploits which would make him a benefactor of the Greeks and his own nation (ἥ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἢ τῆς αὐτοῦ πατρίδος εὐεργέτης γενήσεσθαι).

Thus the comparison is based on two issues, utility and a definition of Greekness (of which self-determination is a crucial element). These are both elements of the politically relevant discourses (λόγοι πολιτικοί) Isocrates professes to write (see on §§ 4-5, above). It serves to present Theseus as a typically Athenian hero, who incorporates the ideals held by the Athenian community.

The catalogue of Theseus' exploits (25-28) serves as a paradigmatic argument in support of the claim of his superiority. Isocrates recalls Theseus' struggle with the Marathon bull and his battle against the Centaurs as an ally of the Lapiths. The catalogue is crowned with the story of his victory over the Minotaur, by which he won freedom for Athens from its annual tribute imposed by the Cretans. The closing sentence's final colon with its effective tricolon disqualifying the tribute and emphatic closure focusing on the freedom as the result of Theseus' actions serves as a powerful means to bring the intended message of the comparison across: τὴν δὲ πόλιν οὕτως ἀνόμου καὶ δεινοῦ καὶ δυσσαπλάκτου προστάγματος ἡλευθέρωσεν.

#### 4. 29-30: the break-off

29 ἀπορῶ δέ...ἐπιλοίποις: the catalogue evoking the image of Theseus as the ideal Athenian hero is suddenly ended, and a completely different topic is introduced. The connection between the previous subsection and the new one is marked by δέ, which indicates

the continuation to a new section, without any specific nexus, except that the new section is part of the narrative complex as a whole <sup>46</sup>

The statement as such is an example of the rhetorical figure διαπόρησις / *dubitatio* see the definition in Quintilian IX,2,19 *cum simulamus quaerere nos, unde incipiendum, ubi desinendum, quid potissimum dicendum, an omnino dicendum sit* Its function is to create the image (*simulamus*) of the speaker in action it thus imparts the illusion of actual performance and spontaneity In this respect Isocrates seems to proceed “more Pindarico” <sup>47</sup>

On Isocrates' explicit aemulation (ὑπερβολή see Ch IV, 128 f) of Pindar in the genre of encomiastic literature see XV,166 δεινότερον, εἰ Πίνδαρον μὲν τὸν ποιητὴν ὅτι τὴν πόλιν ἔρεισμα τῆς Ἑλλάδος ὠνόμασεν, οὕτως ἐτίμησαν, ἐμοὶ δὲ πολὺ πλείω καὶ κάλλιον ἐγκεκωμιακότι μῆδ' ἀσφαλῶς ἐγγένοιτο ἐπιβιώναι An illustration of Isocrates' use of the Pindaric tradition, both with regard to content and form, is provided by the proemium of the *Euagoras* On the implication of this insistence on continuation of the encomiastic genre for the seriousness of the *Helen* as such, see above on section 1, περὶ λέγειν <sup>48</sup>

29-30 αἰσθάνομαι...ἐπιτιμᾶν: on the programmatic issues and technical terminology of this passage see Ch III, 87 f

29 ἔξω φερόμενον τῶν καιρῶν: the admission of transgression of the proper limits for the catalogue of Theseus' exploits not only serves as an excuse The fact that the catalogue is inevitably longer than appropriate to the proportion of the discourse reflects the multitude and significance of Theseus' achievements In this respect the lengthy Theseus-section also has iconic function, in that it underlines, by its length as such, the quality of Theseus as authoritative judge

Deliberate use of iconicity<sup>49</sup> by Isocrates can be illustrated from two further instances

<sup>46</sup> Sicking & van Ophuijsen (1993), 12 13

<sup>47</sup> Cf Pind P IX,78, O XIII,48, see Wilson (1981), 181-187, Race (1990), 51-52, Crotty (1981), 30-31

<sup>48</sup> See Race (1987)

<sup>49</sup> Defined as the functional relation between form and content see Lotman (1973), Bronzwaer (1990)

1. XV, 7: after having considered the best way to defend himself against the accusations raised by his detractors, Isocrates concludes that the only method available would be to write a discourse “as an image of my thought and of the rest of my life” (εἰ γραφείη λόγος ὥσπερ εἰκὼν τῆς ἐμῆς διανοίας καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν ἐμοὶ βεβιωμένων).

2. XI, 73: the effectiveness of a technically accomplished encomium is based on the concept that it can serve as an image of the *laudandus*’ deeds and thought (ἡγοῦμαι καλὰ μὲν εἶναι μνημεῖα καὶ τὰς τῶν σωμάτων εἰκόνας, πολὺ μέντοι πλείονος ἀξίας τὰς τῶν πράξεων καὶ τῆς διανοίας, ὥς ἐν τοῖς λόγοις ἂν τις μόνον τοῖς τεχνικῶς ἔχουσι θεωρήσειεν).

3. XII, 84-87: the decision to insert an encomium on Agamemnon (74-83), which might be considered longer than it should<sup>50</sup> (πολὺ πλείουσιν εἰρημένοις τοῦ δέοντος), is justified by Isocrates by pointing out that it would be more reprehensible to leave out some of Agamemnon’s virtuous attributes than to do so in obedience to the strictly formal requirements of the discourse’s proportion:

ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἡγησάμην οὐχ οὕτως ἔσεσθαι δεινόν, ἣν ἐπὶ τοῦ μέρους τούτου δόξω τισὶ τῶν καιρῶν ἀμελεῖν, ὥς ἦν περὶ ἀνδρὸς τοιοῦτου διαλεγόμενος παραλίπω τι τῶν ἐκείνῳ τε προσόντων ἀγαθῶν κάμοι προσηκόντων εἰπεῖν.

Thus content has priority over form: Agamemnon’s virtues are many and relevant to the argument of the discourse as such (προσηκόντων εἰπεῖν).

According to Isocrates, his decision will receive appreciation from the most cultivated members of his audience, for two reasons: they recognize (a) that when speaking on justice, Isocrates needs to be more concerned with treating that subject in the way it deserves than with the discourse’s proportion (ταύτης ἀξίως ἐρῶ μᾶλλον σπουδάζων ἢ περὶ τὴν τοῦ λόγου συμμετρίαν); and (b) that the correct decision to extensively present their exploits will be in the interest of the *laudandi* (τὴν δὲ περὶ τὰς πράξεις εὐβουλίαν αὐτοῦς ἐπαινουμένους ὠφελήσουσαν).<sup>51</sup>

## 5. 31-37: Theseus founder of the Athenian nation

<sup>50</sup> On τὸ δέον as a technical term in rhetoric see Ch. II, 42, n 100 and Ch. IV, 117, n 63

<sup>51</sup> On the Agamemnon-section as a whole, see Race (1978), who does not recognize the element of iconicity.



**31 μὲν οὖν:** the transition from the break-off (29-30) to the continuation of the main narrative in this subsection is smooth: the announcement of conciseness (30: *περὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὡς ἂν δύνωμαι συντομώτατα διελθεῖν*) is put into practice at the beginning of the new subsection, that opens with an enumeration of Theseus' virtues.

**31 τὴν...διόκησεν:** the opening period contains a priamel: a number of Theseus' virtues are summarily mentioned, as are his exploits (*ἔργα*) revealing them. After having referred to his courage, military knowledge, and piety, Isocrates finally mentions Theseus' prudence (*σωφροσύνη*), which is elaborated upon in what follows (32-37). As this specific virtue is dissociated from the others and will be the basis for the description of Theseus as ideal leader of Athens, the virtue of prudence is clearly highlighted. Here Isocrates takes the opportunity to present Theseus as prudent and intelligent leader of the community, an *ἄνθρωπος πολιτικός*, and as such the ideal type in the perspective of Isocratean education, which is aimed at making men able to govern (*διόκησεν* emphatically placed last). Thus the programmatic character of the speech influences the way in which Theseus' portrait is composed.

**32-34 ὁρῶν γὰρ...πολιτευομένων:** in 32-34 Isocrates introduces, as the first part of the subsection (the beginning of which is marked by *γὰρ*) Theseus' fundamental political conviction: his rejection of tyranny and the exercise of power in the context of a democratic polity. In this respect his attitude reflects not only a general Athenian ideal, but also more specifically Isocrates' own political beliefs. In his ideal constitution, based on the concept of geometrical equality, those qualified to rule are in power by consent of those ruled. This ideal constitution is delineated in the *Areopagiticus*.<sup>52</sup>

**35-37 καὶ πρῶτον μὲν...καταλελειφθαι:** after the establishment of Theseus' principle of government, Isocrates proceeds to illustrate this by presenting three instances of his political prudence. Thus the series of instances in 35-37 is in close connection (marked by *καί*, which

<sup>52</sup> See Brnngmann (1965), 75-96, Lombard (1990), 63-97.

indicates inclusion of a further item in the context of what precedes<sup>53</sup>) with 32-34.

Theseus' three major achievements in government are: (1) founding the Athenian nation by συνοικισμός, the unification of settlements, (2) the institution of rivalry between citizens, based on equality and directed towards distinction on the basis of merit, and (3) founding government on the fundamental principle of acceptance of the ruler by his subjects, on the basis of εὔνοια: reciprocal good-will. As this last point presents a concept fundamental to Isocrates' political thought<sup>54</sup>, it receives elaborate treatment.

The subsection is concluded by a recapitulation of Theseus' significance for Athenian government. By claiming that his πραότης is still discernible in Athenian political life, Isocrates establishes Theseus as founding father of Athens and a representative of the politically moderate, whose ideal is summed up in the concept of the πατριος πολιτεία.

#### 6. the subsection's conclusion

38 τὴν δὴ γεννηθεῖσαν...οὐ γὰρ δὴ: the Theseus-section is concluded by a dual procedure: (a) first the reader is referred back to Helen, the main subject of the discourse, and what was said about her parentage in the first section of the main text. This is information the author and his readers have in common (marked by δὴ<sup>55</sup>), which provides the ring-composition (16: τοῦ γένους αὐτῆς, ὑπὸ Διὸς γεννηθέντων) with both an anaphorical and inclusive function; (b) at the end of the subsection it has become evident that Theseus is indeed a qualified judge of Helen's virtues, and therefore the subsection has served its function as argument from authority. Thus the answer to the rhetorical question πῶς οὐκ ἐπαινεῖν χρὴ... is an emphatic "yes", because now the qualification of Theseus is information shared by all (οὐ γὰρ δὴ...ἔξομεν). This point, too, is embedded in ring-composition (22: πίστιν...Ἐλένην ἐπαινεῖν - 38: ἐπαινεῖν χρὴ...μάρτυρα πιστότερον).

<sup>53</sup> Sickung & van Ophuijsen (1993), 11.

<sup>54</sup> See de Romilly (1958), 92-101; de Blois & Bons (1992), 169-172.

<sup>55</sup> Sickung & van Ophuijsen (1993), 52-53, 141 f.

38 τῶν ἑλένης προσόντων ἀγαθῶν: Helen's virtuous attributes are potential topics for laudatory discourse on her. See V,109-110, where Isocrates discusses the possibilities of producing a novel praise of Heracles, not based on his courage (ἀνδρία) and exploits (ἄθλοι), topics which have been used by so many before, but based on his spiritual virtuous attributes (περὶ...τῶν τῇ ψυχῇ προσόντων ἀγαθῶν). Cf. XI,44: πολλῶν δ' ἐνότων εἰπεῖν ἐξ ὧν ἂν τις καὶ τὸν ἔπαινον καὶ τὴν ἀπολογίαν μακύνειν, οὐχ ἡγοῦμαι δεῖν μακρολογεῖν. See also above on ἴδιον, section 13.

#### - section 4: The judgment of Paris (39-44)

the section can be divided in two subsections:

1. 39-44: Paris' choice
2. 45-48: evaluation

##### 1. 39-44: Paris' choice

39 μετὰ γάρ...κατάβασιν: cohesion between the previous section and the following one is established by the phrase ἵνα δὲ μὴ δοκῶ δι' ἀπορίαν...καὶ περὶ τῶν ἐχομένων διελθεῖν, which announces the transition at the end of 38, and the continuation of the narrative (the beginning of which is marked by γάρ) of Helen's suitors in chronological order in 39 f.

39-40 ἅπαντες...παρασκευάζειν: as a preamble to the main topic of this section, the story of the oath between the princes of Greece and suitors of Helen is told. The fact that Helen is preferred to the women of first rank in their own native towns serves as an argument *a fortiori* for her special status.

Furthermore, cohesion is achieved by mentioning the fact that the princes decided to take the oath, since it was clear to all of them that Helen would be the object of contention in the future (ἐσομένη περιμάχητος). Thus the phrase resumes what was said in section 2 (see above).

41 τῆς μὲν οὖν ἰδίας ἐλπίδος...διήμαρτεν: the conclusion of the preamble is reached (οὖν): Isocrates makes two observations, sc. that their

private expectations were frustrated except for those of Menelaos, and that their shared opinion on Helen as a woman for whom men would contend was correct. This leads up to the treatment of the judgment of Paris in the following paragraphs, and prepares the resumption of the oath and the presentation of its consequences (the Trojan War) in 49.

41-43 οὐ πολλοῦ γὰρ χρόνου...γεγονότες: the story of the judgment of Paris is told in one continuous period of exceptional length: see on §§ 18-20 above.

41 Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ Πριάμου: the image of Paris is generally a negative one (see already Homer VI, 282-3: Paris as μέγα πῆμα Τρωσὶ; cf. 4, 259-62)<sup>56</sup>, a state of affairs implicitly recognized by Isocrates (42: οὐ πρὸς τὰς ἡδονὰς ἀποβλέψας; 45: οὐδεὶς ἂν τοῖς λογισμοῖς τοῦτοις ἐπιτιμήσειεν) but subsequently challenged by a reinterpretation of the choice made by Paris on the basis of an evaluation of his reasons to choose Aphrodite (on which, see below).

41 κριτῆς: the three contending goddesses, who in order to influence the judge, offer Paris gifts, in return for which he should vote for them. Hera offers rule over all Asia (τῆς Ἀσίας βασιλεύειν), Athena victory in war (κρατεῖν ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις), and Aphrodite marriage with Helen (τὸν γάμον τὸν Ἑλένης).<sup>57</sup> In effect, Paris is overwhelmed by the sight of the goddesses, and is forced to choose between their gifts rather than between the goddesses themselves, and thus his choice becomes one of three different ways of life. The possibilities presented are the life of a king, of a warrior, and of a married man, caring for his family. In this way Isocrates is able to reinterpret the myth of Paris' judgment as a moral lesson, in which he can delineate some of the ideals of his own educational programme. Thus the section is an instance of creative mythology and is both an exemplification of the principle of καὶνότης and a means to present the moral view inherent in Isocrates' educational thought.

<sup>56</sup> See RE XX, 1499-1500 s.v. Paris, 8 [E. Wüst]; see also T.C.W. Stinton, *Euripides and the Judgment of Paris*, London 1965, *passim*; for the iconography see Chr. Clairmont, *Das Parisurteil in der antiken Kunst*, Zürich 1951.

<sup>57</sup> On the procedure of this ἀγών and the use of stratagem see I. Weiler, *Der Agon im Mythos. Zur Einstellung der Griechen zum Wettkampf*, Darmstadt 1974, 104-107, 258-263.

In this respect the Paris-episode is comparable to the famous story of the Choice of Heracles, as told by the sophist Prodicus. That story was also meant as a moral lesson: Heracles choose the steep way, leading to virtue (ἀρετή). For a version of this story see Xen. *Mem.* II,1,21-34.

**42 εἴλετο:** as Paris makes a choice based on a conscious and intelligent weighing of arguments, he represents the ideal type of citizen, the product of Isocratean education. His reasoning is presented to have run as follows:

(a) he dismissed pleasure (ἡδονή) as a principle of choice: the significance of this decision is amplified by an inverted argument *a fortiori* by referring to the fact that even the wise (τοῖς εὖ φρονούσιν) regard this as preferable to many other things. In doing so he shows himself to conform to the picture of the ideal political leader, as it is presented in XV,132: χρή τοὺς πολιτευομένους καὶ βουλομένους ἀρεσκεῖν προαιρεῖσθαι μὲν τῶν τε πράξεων τὰς ὠφελιμωτάτας καὶ βελτίστας καὶ τῶν λόγων τοὺς ἀληθεστάτους καὶ δικαιοτάτους. His moral purpose is contrasted in 133 with the inclination of the many: ὁρᾶς δὲ τὴν φύσιν τῆν τῶν πολλῶν ὡς διάκειται πρὸς τὰς ἡδονάς. Cf. XV, 221: πολλοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων διὰ τὰς ἀκρασίας οὐκ ἐμμένουσι τοῖς λογισμοῖς, ἀλλ' ἀμελήσαντες τοῦ συμφέροντος ἐπὶ τὰς ἡδονὰς ὁρμῶσιν; cf. also II,29 (with XV,71); III,40,44; IX,45; XV,289 (Isocrates' students disdain a life of pleasure);

(b) by marrying Helen he acquires the good esteemed highest among men: to be Zeus' son by marriage and thus provide for his offspring the descendancy of Zeus from both the side of the father and the mother. Thereby he secured for himself the state of εὐδαιμονία, of which personal and lasting success is a constituent element next to having successful children. See the μακαρισμός of Euagoras (IX,70-72): Εὐαγόρας δ' οὐ μόνον θαυμαστότατος ἀλλὰ καὶ μακαριστότατος ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὧν διετέλεσεν. τί γὰρ ἀπέλειπεν εὐδαιμονίας, ὅς τοιούτων μὲν προγόνων ἔτυχεν...θνητὸς δὲ γενόμενος ἀθάνατον τὴν περὶ αὐτοῦ μνήμην κατέλιπε...πρὸς δὲ τούτοις...εὐπαιδίας τυχεῖν...καὶ τὸ μέγιστον, ...οὐδένα κατέλιπεν ἰδιωτικοῖς ὀνόμασι προσαγορευόμενον, ...

**44 ἡπίστατο γάρ:** Paris seeks to avoid the insecurities of good luck, and to attain what has permanence: nobility of birth (εὐγένειαν αἰεῖ

τοῖς αὐτοῖς παραμένουσιν). For the concept of permanence as something good and causally linked with nobility and wisdom see VII, 13: καίτοι τὰς εὐπραγίας...καὶ παραμενούσας...τοῖς ἄριστα καὶ σωφρονέστατα τὴν αὐτῶν πόλιν διοικοῦσιν. The principle that the wise rest their hopes on their own actions and insight (τοῖς αὐτῶν πράγμασι καὶ ταῖς αὐτῶν διανοαίαις), and not count on the mistakes of others, for good luck will only last when based on effort, is given at VIII,60. Thus, in his action and reasoning Paris also reflects Isocratean teaching.

**44 εὐγένειαν:** as Paris is used by Isocrates as a model for his own educational ideal, the use of this word might be intentional to underline the Athenian quality the reinterpreted figure of Paris here receives. Isocrates probably plays on the connotations of Athenian communal ideology the word will have to the Athenian audience. Thus a discrete appeal to the audience's emotions (their sense of being part of a community) becomes part of the argument.

## 2. 45-48: evaluation

**45-47 τῶν μὲν οὖν ἐφ' ὀφρονούντων...διαφέροντα:** in §§ 45-47 Isocrates evaluates the reasons (λογισμοῖς) Paris had for choosing Aphrodite, and he criticizes those who find fault with Paris' reasoning. This evaluation is an integral part of the argument in this section: it follows the treatment of the motivation for the choice in 43-44 and is, as such, a separate subsection (marked by μὲν οὖν: see on 16, 23, 31 above), concluded by a transitional paragraph (48) leading up to the next section (see below).

The evaluation consists of a logical interpretation of the episode as it is presented in the first subsection. It is important to note that the episode has a clear orientation, in accordance with the main theme of the discourse as a whole: the significance of Helen's beauty. Although Paris is made judge in a beauty-contest, when he reaches his decision he assesses the utility and moral quality of the gifts offered to him by the goddesses. The assessment is made by the application of standards preferred and advocated by the author, Isocrates himself. By this procedure Isocrates provides an interpretation of the episode from the

perspective of his own educational programme, like he did with the myth of Theseus (see above)

This subsection with its description of the procedure of interpretation of myth and its methodology, allows the formulation of some general observations on the use of mythical material by Isocrates

(1) Isocrates' approach can be characterised as "rational" the myth is not introduced for its own sake, but for the specific reason that it serves a purpose In this case Isocrates' purpose is, first of all, rhetorical the myth is made into an argument and is therefore an integral part of the argumentation of the discourse as a whole Furthermore, its introduction allows Isocrates to include the evaluation, which serves an exemplary function it illustrates Isocratean education In this sense the myth serves as a medium it is used as material for the presentation of a point the author wishes to make As such, this approach is comparable to the literary use tragedians make of myth described by Aristotle (*Poet* 14, 1453 b 22 f) τοὺς μὲν οὖν παρειλημμένους μύθους λύειν οὐκ ἔστιν, λέγω δὲ οἶον τὴν Κλυταιμνήστραν ἀποθανοῦσαν ὑπὸ τοῦ Ὀρέστου ( ), αὐτὸν δὲ (sc the writer of tragedy) εὕρισκειν δεῖ καὶ τοῖς παραδεδομένοις χρῆσθαι καλῶς Myth is the raw material used in the process of invention

(2) The method of not taking a myth's meaning at face value, but to seek an interpretation revealing its meaning, is used by Isocrates in XIII,2 There he argues that foreknowledge of the future is something of which human nature is incapable (τὰ μέλλοντα προγινώσκειν οὐ τῆς ἡμετέρας φύσεώς ἐστιν) This statement is supported by reference to Homer, who has the highest reputation for wisdom (ὁ μεγίστην ἐπὶ σοφίᾳ δόξαν εἰληφώς) He represents the gods as at times deliberating about the future τοὺς θεοὺς πεποίηκεν ἔστιν ὅτε βουλευομένους ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν <sup>58</sup> The reason for this is not that Homer knew the divine mind, but because he wanted to make it clear that the capacity to have foreknowledge of the future is impossible to attain for mankind ἡμῖν ἐνδείξασθαι βουλόμενος ὅτι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐν τούτῳ τῶν ἀδυνάτων ἐστίν Here Homer serves as educator and sophist avant-la-lettre, displaying an approach to myth adopted generally in intellectual circles at the time and thereby, because of his acknowledged authority, supports that approach <sup>59</sup> A man endowed with

<sup>58</sup> See e.g. Hom. XVI 431 ff. XXII 168 ff.

<sup>59</sup> On the use of Homer as role model for the sophistic movement see O'Sullivan (1992), 66-79, esp. 67 & n. 35

practical intelligence will interpret myth and identify what it is that myth wants to "show" (ἐνδείξασθαι). By adopting this procedure Isocrates follows the educational tradition of the sophists.<sup>60</sup> In this particular case the deliberation amongst the gods on the future serves as an *a fortiori* argument: if the gods do not have foreknowledge of things to come, then certainly humankind will be incapable of attaining that capacity.

(3) The rational quality of this approach is reflected in the phraseology: there is a high frequency of words referring to intellectual activities. Some of these directly refer to the method followed by Isocrates, others do so indirectly and *e contrario*: they are used by Isocrates in his description of what other interpreters are neglecting to do. These words are: ἐνθυμεῖσθαι: the process of logical thought - σκοπεῖν; σκέπτεσθαι: exercising critical sense - λογισμός; reasoning.<sup>61</sup>

Generally speaking, it should be noted that Isocrates uses these words in the context of his concept of δόξα. To him "opinion" is preferable to "absolute knowledge" as a basis of intellectual activity, because the latter is unattainable, given the contingency of human existence. When exercising his δόξα, a man has at his disposal a number of specific intellectual capabilities, which he can bring to bear in situations as they arise. Some of these presented below can clarify the method under discussion here.

- XV,184: a fundamental requirement for being capable of judgment is a conscious activation of the mind and the observation of what consequently happens for the most part (προσέχοντες τὸν νοῦν καὶ δυνάμενοι θεωρεῖν τὸ συμβαῖνον ὥς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ). As a result of this one will most often (πλειστάκις) be successful in reaching good judgment;

- VIII,8: here the general rule given in XV,184 is applied to political deliberation. People of intelligence, when deliberating, must not think that they have knowledge of what the consequence will be, but must, as men who exercise their judgment, thus think about them (= the matters on which they deliberate), whatever the outcome will be (χρὴ δὲ τοῦς

<sup>60</sup> On the sophists as interpreters of Homer see Richardson (1975) and id. (1992); an example of this procedure can be found in Plato *Symp.* 190 b 6-7, where Homer's story on the giants Ephialtes and Otus (V, 385 f.; 11, 307-320) is reinterpreted by Aristophanes as referring to the androgynes: ὁ λέγει "Ὀμηρος περὶ Ἐφιάλτου τε καὶ Ὠτου, περὶ ἐκείνων (sc. the androgynes) λέγεται.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. IV,6, 9; II, 7 (= XV, 255); V, 29; XV, 292; XII, 261; see on XI, 35 below; see also Mikkola (1954), 73-74, 77; Hornblower (1987), 100 f.; Perilli (1992).



νοῦν ἔχοντας περὶ ὧν δ' ἂν βουλευόμενοι μὴ νομίζειν εἰδέναι τὸ συμβησόμενον, ἀλλ' ὥς δόξη μὲν χρωμένους, ὃ τι ἂν τύχη δὲ γενησόμενον<sup>62</sup>, οὕτω διανοεῖσθαι περὶ αὐτῶν) As the future is uncertain anyway, in deliberation intelligent men must not pretend to have certain knowledge, but must exercise their capacity of judgment

- XI, 35 in his critique of his rival Polycrates, Isocrates maintains that any writer of encomiastic literature should produce discourse that is able to stand careful scrutiny (ἐξετάζειν) In this discourse, the issue is the Egyptian king Busiris' authorship of certain institutions Since that issue is undecided, the question is open to general consideration and judgment needs to be made (ἐν κοινῷ τῶν πραγμάτων ὄντων καὶ δοξάσαι δέον περὶ αὐτῶν) The appropriate procedure to do this rests on the use of argument from probability: ἐκ τῶν εἰκότων σκοπούμενος νομίσειεν (τις) As Busiris is of divine descent, is the most powerful man of his time and most renowned amongst other peoples it stands to reason (the evidential value of the argument underlined by δὴ που) to ascribe the authorship to him

It appears, then, that δόξα depends on experience and observation, and in that respect can be said to be of empirical nature Its usefulness lies in its dual application of diagnosis (the capability of gaining insight) and of prognosis (the capability of foretelling a probable outcome)<sup>63</sup>

(4) As myth belongs to the past, an intelligent man should not, in evaluating an historic episode, apply his contemporary set of criteria only, but he should consider the historical context Those who fail to do so easily find fault with Paris τῶν δὲ μηδὲν πρὸ τοῦ πράγματος ἐνθυμουμένων ἀλλὰ τὸ συμβαῖνον μόνον σκοπούμενων ἤδη τινὲς ἐλοιδόρησαν αὐτόν To neglect this additional element when dealing with past events is, however, considered a folly (ἄνοια), in instance of not thinking correctly (see also Ch IV, p 133 f)

Thus the subsection on the evaluation of Paris' motivation serves as an illustration of how the concept of δόξα is practically applied in interpreting myth<sup>64</sup> and, given the programmatic character of the discourse as such, as an illustration of Isocrates' methods of teaching Paris has become a model (παράδειγμα) with protreptic function An

<sup>62</sup> The addition of ἀγνοοῦντας by Ritschl is superfluous, cf Laistner (1927), 80 *ad loc*

<sup>63</sup> See Jaeger (1960) 289 n 2

<sup>64</sup> Jakel (1986), 78 79

example is V,114: Philip is urged to imitate (μιμήσασθαι) the spirit of Heracles, who has just been depicted as benefactor of all Hellenes in a laudatory section 111-112. See also above, section 1, on the serious intent of the encomium.

The criteria to be applied, then, when reasoning with a sense of history are the following (46-48):

- historical context: a contemporary man should not consider his judgment more competent than the one the gods selected (sc. Paris'): as the gods were clearly very much concerned about the issue itself, they will surely have selected the best judge possible;
- objectivity: one should consider (σκοπεῖν) the judge's quality and not scrutinize (δοκιμάζειν) him by the feelings of anger of those defeated in the contest, but by the reasons why the goddesses unanimously selected his insight (διάνοια). In doing so the gods submitted themselves to the judgment of a mortal: given the fact that the stronger (*in casu* the gods) always prevail over the weaker, this proves the exceptional superiority of this mortal's intelligence;
- assessment: the decision Paris reached was the good outcome of a process of deliberation (βεβουλευῆσθαι). He recognized that he would have been a fool (ἄνόητος), if he would have put less value on beauty than the gods themselves did. Therefore one could say that he is an example of a man making good use of his capacity of judgment.

48 ἐλόμενον...ἠθέλησαν: the phrase τὸν...ἐλόμενον brings the audience back to the main focus of the Paris-section: his choice to live with Helen. With this also returns the motive of her being the object of contention amongst the heroes (ἧς ἔνεκα πολλοὶ τῶν ἡμιθέων ἀποθνήσκουσιν ἠθέλησαν). This prepares the way for setting the next step in the discourse's main argument: the treatment of the Trojan War, which was a direct result of Paris' choice.

#### - section 5: The Trojan War (49-53)

49 τίς...ὑπερεῖδεν: the section is presented as the next episode in Helen's life, which follows her involvement with Paris. The narrative is continued, and a new element is introduced (δέ).

The rhetorical question underlines the significance attributed to the marriage with Helen by both conflicting parties: it brought war to both Greeks and non-Greeks and they considered it a matter of national interest. Technically the device serves as a means of amplification.

**49 δῆλον...γέγονεν:** the war between the Greeks and the barbarians over Helen is presented in the context of the general East-West conflict (see below). Isocrates refers to the many causes of conflict prior to this one: he may be thinking of the abductions of Io, Europe and Medea (see Hdt. I, 1-3).

The conflict is further amplified by characterizing the war as in many respects the biggest to date. This statement seems polemical and directed against Thucydides, who in the introductory sections of his *History of the Peloponnesian War* claimed that the Peloponnesian War had been the greatest (I, 1-2: τὸν πόλεμον...μέγαν τε ἔσεσθαι καὶ ἀξιολογώτατον τῶν προγεγενημένων; I, 21, 2: ὁ πόλεμος οὗτος, καίπερ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐν ᾧ μὲν ἂν πολεμῶσι τὸν παρόντα αἰεὶ μέγιστον κρινόντων, παυσαμένων δὲ τὰ ἀρχαία μᾶλλον θαυμαζόντων, ἅπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἔργων σκοποῦσι δηλώσει ὅμως μείζων γεγενημένος αὐτῶν). These statements by Thucydides can, in turn, be explained as polemical and self-assertive: at the opening of his historiographical work the author deals with his predecessor, Herodotus, and claims superiority.<sup>65</sup> It is in the interest of Isocrates' purposes in the *Helen* to utilize the inclination of the general public to idealize the wars of the past, a tendency identified by Thucydides. The image of a superior Athens must remain unchallenged: therefore no reminiscence should be made to the disastrous outcome for Athens of the Peloponnesian War.

**50 ἐξόν...ἀπελθεῖν:** after the war's magnitude Isocrates depicts the mentality and spirit of the parties involved in the conflict. Both sides are willing to bring the utmost sacrifices in their battle over Helen. The barbarians allow their land and cities to be laid waste, as the Athenians had done in their struggle with Sparta. Maybe this statement is an intentional reminder by Isocrates of that traumatic period in Athenian

<sup>65</sup> See Lendle (1992), 77-84, the claim to superiority is based on both historiographical method and rhetorical purpose see Woodman (1988), 28 f., Hornblower (1991), 63.

history, which took place less than fifty years ago.<sup>66</sup> The appeal to collective memory can serve as a powerful means to underline the determination (for this particular aspect see esp. Th. II,61,2) of the barbarians and, through this, the strong influence Helen had on them. The same is true for the Greeks, who are willing to sacrifice their best years and suffer long separation from their home and families.

51 καὶ...ἔσσεσθαι: the section is concluded with an explicit reference to the conflict as being one between Europe and Asia (see also below, on section 8).<sup>67</sup> At this point Helen herself and the conflict on her behalf acquire features of fourth century Panhellenic ideology. The Trojan War can be seen as the prefiguration of the war between Greeks and the peoples of the East, especially the Persians. The fact that in this section the name Troy is never explicitly mentioned is conducive to the realisation of that interpretation.

52 τοσοῦτος δ' ἔρωσ ἐνέπεσε: the ardent desire for the hardships just described on the level of mankind also took possession of the gods. This is the next step (δέ) in the narrative of the subsection and it enlarges Helen's sphere of influence to the divine world. Again, this is an amplification (underlined by the particle-cluster οὐ μόνον...ἀλλὰ καί, which in itself implies amplification of the second element<sup>68</sup>).

Reference to ἔρωσ prepares the way for the next section, the eulogy on beauty (54-60), where the explanation of Helen's influence is implicitly based on human inclination towards the beautiful (55: τῶν καλῶν ἔρωσ ἡμῖν ἐγγίγνεται, see below.)

The phrase ἔρωσ ἐνέπεσε suggests overpowering force: cf. Aesch. Ag. 341: ἔρωσ δὲ μή τις πρότερον ἐμπίπτη στρατῶ | πορθεῖν; Soph. Ant. 782: Ἔρωσ, ὅς ἐν κτήμασι πίπτει; Th. VI,24,3: ἔρωσ ἐνέπεσε τοῖς πᾶσιν ἐκπλεῦσαι.

<sup>66</sup> The devastation of Attica and its effect on the evacuated inhabitants is described by Thucydides (II, 21,2-3, 47, 2, 54,1; 59,1, 61,2) and, of course, reflected in Aristophanes' comedies *Acharnians* and *Peace*. See also Xen. *Oec* 6, 6-7.

<sup>67</sup> See J. de Romilly, "Isocrates and Europe", *G & R* 39 (1992), 2-13.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. V,116 (also with an antithesis of ἄνθρωποι and θεοί) and frequently elsewhere; see Braunert (1962), 226-236, esp. 233 f.

52-53 τοῖς θεοῖς...πρὸς σφᾶς αὐτοὺς ἐπολέμησαν: the commitment of the gods to the cause of Helen is made apparent by Isocrates from two actions the gods undertake. This serves as another amplification of the conflict:

(1) the gods are willing to sacrifice the lives of their own offspring, considering (ἡγούμενοι) that it is more honourable for them to have died fighting for Helen than to live without having taken risks on her account. This decision on their part is understandable, because

(2) the gods themselves engage in a struggle even more terrible than the one they fought against the Giants. Then they fought together (μετ' ἀλλήλων ἐμαχέσαντο), now they fight against each other (πρὸς σφᾶς αὐτοὺς ἐπολέμησαν). The significance of this statement becomes clear, if one considers the context of Panhellenism in this section: the gods fail to preserve unity (ὁμόνοια). Unification of Greece against the common enemy in the East was a primary goal of the Panhellenistic ideology. The all pervading power of Helen's beauty is here painfully demonstrated: it is even capable of causing conflict between the gods, and their battle is therefore δεινός, as it is contrary to expectation.

Here a climax is reached in the description of the sequence of situations, in which Helen was object of contention (περιμάχητος). As the gods are involved, the audience might develop doubts on the praiseworthiness of Helen. The implied question is answered in the next section.

#### - section 6: the eulogy on beauty (54-60)

The eulogy consists of two parts:

- 54-58: the opinions of mankind on beauty's power;
- 59-60: the attitudes of the gods as proof of beauty's power.

In this twofold structure the section is analogous to the previous: in both cases the issue at hand gains significance by its elevation to the level of the divine.

54 εὐλόγως: the phrasing is intentional and effective: the section is announced in its double function of eulogy on beauty and integral part of the argument.

54 εὐλόγως...αὐτῆς: the indirect and unexpressed question on the behaviour of the gods and on the aptness of Helen as object of praise is answered in the opening sentence of the new section. With respect to both the gods' behaviour and their reasons for it (κάκεινοι..) and the way in which Isocrates praises Helen the answer is prepared by εὐλόγως, which is emphatically placed first and which is further explained by κάλλους γάρ..(see below).

The phrase τηλικαύταις ὑπερβολαῖς seems to contain an indirect justification for raising the implied question at the end of section 53 (see above). The context could suggest that ὑπερβολή here has a negative connotation and should be interpreted as "excess" (cf. IX,73: on Euagoras: τινες τῶν ποιητῶν περί τινος...ὑπερβολαῖς κέχρηται, λέγοντες ὡς ἦν θεὸς ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἢ δαίμων θνητός). But even if taken neutrally as "in superlative terms" (cf. V,11: καθ' ὑπερβολήν; XII,123 - which provides a prescription on ὑπερβολή in praise - : δεῖ δὲ τοὺς ἐπιχειροῦντας καθ' ὑπερβολήν τινας ἐπαινεῖν μὴ τοῦτο ἐπιδεικνύναι μὴ πονηροὺς ὄντας αὐτοὺς, ἀλλ' ὡς ἀπάσαις ταῖς ἀρεταῖς καὶ τῶν τότε καὶ τῶν νῦν διήνεγκαν) Isocrates evidently feels the need to provide an explanation.

54 κάλλους γάρ...ἔστιν: the explanation offered (γάρ) opens with an emphatic reference to the central topic of the section: κάλλος and its power. Now attention is focused on beauty itself, while it was repeatedly present as an element of previous sections (see 16; 19; 23; 37; 41; 43; 48; 53). In these sections examples were offered of the power beauty has: now the line-up of these examples leads to a culmination, in which the power of beauty as such is reflected upon.

It is clear from many literary and philosophic writings that the Greeks had special interest in beauty, its influences, and human responses to it. In their view there existed a direct connection between the quality of beauty in the exterior, physical sense and in the interior, moral sense. This can be illustrated by the following observations:

- in Homer there is no clear distinction between exterior appearance and intrinsic value, which leads to the expectation that a beautiful man will also be a sensible and a brave man: see XI, 363-7 and, of course, the *ε* *contrario* case of Thersites; cf. Hes. *Th.* 79-93.<sup>69</sup> This idea essentially

<sup>69</sup> See W.J. Verdenius, "Notes on the proem of Hesiod's *Theogony*", *Mnem.* 25 (1972), 251; id. (1983), 25, 53; F. Solmsen, "The Gift of Speech in Homer and Hesiod", *TAPA* 85 (1954), 1-15.

remains present in Isocrates' time one only has to refer to physical beauty stimulating philosophic desire in Plato's *Symposium*, a dialogue that in itself is a clear reflection of the fascination exercised by beauty. The sequence of speeches in that dialogue can be read as a gradual ascent from the eulogy of eros or sexual desire as a product of the confrontation with physical beauty to the eulogy of Socrates' inner beauty or virtue, the product of his contemplation of absolute beauty.<sup>70</sup>

- many instances in literature bear witness to the fact that beauty was considered to have a superhuman quality. See, e.g., the story, told by Plutarch *Ages* 34, 8-11, about the Spartan Isadas, whose exceptional physical beauty so much overawed his opponents that he was able to break through their lines unhurt. This happened either because a god protected him or *μείζον τι καὶ κρείττον ἀνθρώπου φανείς τοῖς ἐναντίοις*. Cf. Hom. VI, 119 f. (Glaucus and Diomedes), Hdt. IX, 25, 1 (Masistios).

The exterior and interior range in the concept of beauty is reflected in the ambiguity of the word *καλόν*, which associates beauty with appropriateness and fitness for function. The connection with *ἀγαθόν* is therefore close at hand. The former is the more inclusive term, as is clear from Arist. *Met.* XIII, 1078 a 31: *τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ τὸ καλὸν ἕτερον τὸ μὲν γὰρ αἰεὶ ἐν πράξει, τὸ δὲ καλὸν καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀκίνητοις*.<sup>71</sup> The translation "fine, fineness" most approximates the wide range of *τὸ καλόν*.<sup>72</sup>

**54 ῥάδιον δὲ γινῶναι:** the power of beauty is delineated by the successive treatment of different aspects from which to consider it

1 (54) as a virtue,

2 (55) as a stimulant of desire,

3 (56-57) as a stimulant of voluntary submission,

4 (58) as an object of reverence

The structure of the argument in each consideration is essentially based on contrast

<sup>70</sup> Thus the sequence in itself can be seen as a formal representation of Diotima's Ascent to Beauty in Socrates' speech, on Alcibiades' speech see Waterfield (1994), xxxix; see also Rutherford (1995) 197-204.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Plato *Symp.* 201 c 1-7, 204 c 7 f.

<sup>72</sup> See Guthrie (1969), 170; Woodruff (1982) 110, 181-189; see also Dover (1974), 41-45, 69-73; Grassi (1962) 54-69.

54 τῶν μὲν γὰρ...ἐστίν: the first consideration involves a contrast between beauty as something desirable and other things to be desired. Many things, to which the virtues of courage, wisdom and justice cannot be attributed, appear to be valued higher than these virtues themselves. Thus, there are things considered valuable, which do not have the principal virtues (the same ones are mentioned in 1, see above) as attributes. This is different with the attribute beauty: nothing lacking beauty will be found desirable. By using this opposition Isocrates is able to pronounce κάλλος an ἀρετή superior to even the principal ἀρεταί.

The use of ἰδέα (54, 58) to refer to beauty reflects the full semantic range of κάλλος and covers both physical beauty (the exterior aspect) and nobility and goodness (the interior aspect). Further the word underlines that the perception of κάλλος is, in the first instance, a visual experience. The "spectacle of beauty" prompts the primary reaction of physical attraction and the secondary reaction of philosophical desire.<sup>73</sup> The element of visual perception is reflected in the use of ἰρῆ and its cognates in the immediate context of beauty: see 17 περίβλεπτον, 18 ἰδών, 39 ὑπεριδόντες (?), 42 ὄψεως, 56 ἰδόντες, 61 ὄψιν.

Similarly, ἀρετή in itself is valued most highly, because of all states of mind (ἐπιτηδεύματα) it is the most beautiful. As a man's state of mind causes him to act in a certain way, virtuousness becomes evident by making choices and acting accordingly. Of this notion the sections on Theseus, Paris, and the Trojan War are exemplary instances.

55 γνοίη δ' ἂν τις.. ἐστίν: the second point of consideration is beauty's superiority to other things. Beauty owes its superior status to the effect it has on human beings: with respect to other things they need, they are satisfied to want to have them and feel no further stirring in their soul. It is beauty, however, that awakens desire (ἔρως).<sup>74</sup> Different from the response these other things elicit, desire produces an additional affect (προσπεπόνθαμεν) in the soul, which exceeds the βούλεσθαι of these other things to the same degree as the beautiful is superior to them.

56-57 καὶ τοῖς μὲν.. νομίζομεν: the third point of consideration is the attitude of men towards persons attributed with beauty. Again the

<sup>73</sup> Ferrari (1990) 142 f. cf. Plato *Phdr.* 251 d 1 f.

<sup>74</sup> For the concept of "didactic ἔρως", i.e. the enthusiasm for a subject, see Shorey (1909), 197.



argument is by contrast: while towards persons endowed with qualities other than beauty and superior to one's own the reaction will be a feeling of jealousy, to those who are beautiful the reaction will be a feeling of good-will and a willingness to serve. The *servitium amoris* is illustrated from two perspectives:

- it is considered preferable to the rule over others;
- those who bring it into practice are φιλόκαλοι καὶ φιλόπονοι.

Beauty stimulates an attitude of voluntary submission. The phrase εὐνοὶ γυγνόμεθα suggests the notion of εὐνοία, fundamental to Isocrates' socio-political thinking (see above). Φιλοκάλοι seems to appeal to the mentality of the Athenians as "lovers of beauty", as it is expressed by Pericles in Thucydides' version of his Funeral Speech (II,40,1): φιλοκαλοῦμεν, which also exploits the complete semantic range of καλός.

**57 θεραπεύοντες:** on the motive of *servitium amoris* see also Plato *Symp.* 183 a-b, 196 c (Agathon's speech).<sup>75</sup>

**58 τοσαύτη...ποιήσαντας:** the fourth and concluding consideration bestows on beauty a divine aura. Isocrates contrasts people who misuse beauty to the correct use of beauty, which aims at its preservation rather than its exploitation. Here he uses terms which have religious associations. The beautiful body is seen as shrine, inaccessible to the base (ἄβατον τοῖς πονηροῖς ἱερόν); towards the attribute of beauty (the term ἰδέα is resumed from consideration 1 in ch. 54) the attitude is one of reverence and caution (εὐσέβεια καὶ πρόνοια). With the elevation the divine level the audience is prepared for the next element in the eulogy.

**59-60 καὶ τί δεῖ...ἡβουλήθησαν:** Isocrates amplifies the power of beauty by showing that the gods are similar to mankind in their attitude towards that quality, and that in their reaction they even exceed humankind. This is illustrated by two instances, where again the argument makes use of contrast:

1. Zeus the Almighty (Ζεὺς ὁ κρατῶν πάντων) becomes humble (ταπεινός) in his approach to beauty, as can be seen from his disguises in his

<sup>75</sup> See Rutherford (1995), 202, on the supposed Isocratean origin of the motive see O. Carbonero, "De isocratea amatoris servitii origine", *Latinitas* 40 (1992), 193-196.

dealings with mortal women. He denounces his usual prerogative to the use of force (βία) and avails himself of cunning (τέχνη);

2. they show consideration towards goddesses who succumb to mortal beauty, which they do not consider shameful, but rather a glorious deed to be celebrated in hymns.

**60 μέγιστον...ἀπάσας:** the concluding sentence allows a recapitulation of the main points of the section. (1) there is a direct relation between τὸ κάλλος and the divine; (2) τὸ κάλλος is a virtue. The conclusion anticipates the request to the intellectuals (educated in Isocrates' school) in 66 (see below).

#### - section 7: Helen's exploits (61-65)

In this section Isocrates concentrates on Helen's ἔργα. They are introduced after the eulogy on beauty, which already elevated the narrative to divine level. Her exploits are now presented in a divine context as well. The section is divided in two parts, one (61-63) showing Helen's benefactions towards members of her own family, the other (64-65) showing her to be patron of the poets Stesichorus and Homer.

**61 ὃν Ἑλένη...διήνεγκεν:** the nexus with the previous section is strong, the "relative connection" providing cohesion.<sup>76</sup> The eulogy on beauty ended with reference to the many mortals who earned their immortality by that quality. These mortals are the antecedent in the relative connection. As the eulogy presented κάλλος in both its physical and moral aspects, now Helen herself is treated in the same framework. In comparison to her antecedents her status is immediately amplified (πλέον ἔσχεν).

**61-62 οὐ γὰρ μόνον...κατεστήσατο:** Helen's superiority is argued (γάρ) from the observation that she not only attained the status of immortality, in which respect she is comparable to her antecedents referred to in 60, but also that she made commendable use of her godlike

<sup>76</sup> Sicking & van Ophuijsen (1993), 18-19

power (for οὐ μόνον...ἀλλὰ καὶ underlining the amplification see above, p. 181). This is illustrated from two instances:

- πρῶτον μὲν: she elevated her brothers to divine status and made their mutation (μεταβολήν) from humans to gods credible by bestowing evident honours on them;

- μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα: out of gratitude for Menelaos' efforts on her behalf, she freed him from the curse that rested on his family and (gradation) she made him a god, to be sharer of her house and throne.

Isocrates' representation of Helen and her exploits is similar to the way he represented Paris. In his reinterpretation of the traditional myth the evident aspect of physical beauty is complemented by the addition exploits commendable from a moral point of view. Helen's moral beauty shows itself in her altruism.

63 καὶ...οὔσιν: the statements on Helen's divinity are substantiated by a reference to the fact that the city of Sparta pays honour and reverence to Helen and Menelaos as gods (ὡς θεοὶς ἀμφοτέροις οὔσιν). The trustworthiness of Sparta as a witness is established by pointing out that the city, that is observing this custom till recent times (ἔτι καὶ νῦν), shows special care in the preservation of tradition (μάλιστα τὰ παλαιὰ διασφύζουσιν). The validity of the argument from tradition is explained by Isocrates in XII,149-150: it derives from the fact that belief in tradition is shared by many intelligent men: εἰ μὲν γὰρ μόνος ἐπίστευον τοῖς τε λεγομένοις περὶ τῶν παλαιῶν...νῦν δὲ πολλοὶ καὶ νοῦν ἔχοντες ταῦτόν ἐμοὶ φανεῖν ἂν πεπονθότες. The reference to tradition thus becomes "nothing unreasonable" (οὐδὲν ἄλογον).<sup>77</sup> The persuasive effect of the reference to "many" is indicated by Aristotle *Rh.* I,6,1363 a 9: οἱ δὲ πολλοὶ ὥσπερ πάντες φαίνονται.

64-65 ἐνεδείξατο...ποίησιν: here Helen's responsibility is claimed for the origin of two literary works: Homer's *Iliad* and Stesichorus' *Palinode*. Both works are relevant to this discourse. First, as a punishment for his blasphemous ode on her, Helen deprived Stesichorus

<sup>77</sup> On Isocrates' use of historical data (which encompasses both myth and history) see Hamilton (1979).

of his eye-sight. After he composed his recantation (παλινφθία), he was restored to his normal state. Secondly, some *Homeridae* claim that Helen appeared to Homer in a dream and commanded him to compose a poem on the expedition to Troy. This must refer to the *Iliad*, and the story may even originate from VI,357-8, where Helen says to Hector: .. ὥς καὶ ὀπίσσω ἰ ἀνθρώποισι πελώμεθ' ἀοίδιμοι ἔσσομένοισιν.

In both cases she is presented as a deity stimulating literary works, and in that capacity she is comparable to a Muse. She is thus introduced in the realm of literature and its producers (ποίησις), to which also Isocrates himself claims to belong (see Ch. I, § 2 and Ch. III, p. 99 f.). In this particular role she can serve as an ideal figure to those engaged in literary production, especially when these literary works have a serious ethical and educational purpose, since she herself is commendable as a model from that very perspective.

66 ὥς οὖν...ἀπαρχάς: the conclusion (οὖν) to this section declares the protreptic intent of the discourse as a whole. All men must pay tribute to Helen in a way appropriate and compatible to their means. For the “philosophers”, i.e. those who adhere to Isocratean φιλοσοφία, this consists in speaking of her in a way that does justice to the qualities she has: πειρᾶσθαι τι λέγειν περὶ αὐτῆς ἄξιον τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ἐκείνη. The phrase contains the essence of Isocrates’ programme of rhetoric (see XIII,12: οὗτος εἶναι δοκεῖ τεχνικώτατος, ὅς τις ἂν ἀξίως μὲν λέγῃ τῶν πραγμάτων, μηδὲν δὲ τῶν αὐτῶν τοῖς ἄλλοις εὐρίσκειν δύνηται). It is also the way in which they can show to be educated in his school, as can be concluded from πεπαιδευμένοις, which conveys the training (παιδεία, cf. οἱ πεπαιδευμένοι in XII, 30-32) received there.

The implication is that the educated should produce “beautiful” or “fine” discourse. For Isocrates *kállōs* is a quality of good discourse: see IV, 4, 13; XV, 77, 276 (and cf. Plato *Gorg.* 474 e 5-7).<sup>78</sup>

#### - section 8: Finale (67-69)

<sup>78</sup> See Wersdorfer (1940), 20, Eucken (1983), 92-93, on the general concept of the association of persuasive power with beautiful form of expression see Verdenius (1981), 121-122, see also *ad* 54, above

67 πολὺ δέ...ἐστίν: the discourse's conclusion opens with the assertion that much more could have been said on the subject. This statement suggests the author's confidence in his own ability, especially regarding his powers of invention. The potential abundance of material is proof of his technical ability as a composer of discourse, and as such serves the "manifesto"-function (ἐπάγγελμα) of the discourse itself (see above).

67 χωρίς γὰρ...νομίζοιμεν: the invention of many practical arts, among which is rhetoric<sup>79</sup>, was ascribed to Homer, whose works were considered the source for information on a wide range of subjects. An illustration of this is Xen. *Symp.* III,5, IV,6.

As Isocrates argued in the previous section, Helen prompted the composition of the *Iliad*. Now she can be credited with the authorship of the useful arts just referred to. The use of ἀνευγεῖν and αἰτίαν suggests that in an aetiological context the image of Helen as "first inventor" (πρῶτος εὐρετής) is conveyed.<sup>80</sup> Her responsibility for the establishment of these arts is proved by "leading back" (ἀναφέρειν) these arts to her action in the past.<sup>81</sup>

67-68 εὐρήσομεν γὰρ...βαρβάρων: in this instance the theme of Panhellenism is explicitly addressed. Its constituent elements of unity among the Greeks (τοὺς Ἑλληνας ὁμονοήσαντας) and a common expedition against the barbarians (κοινὴν στρατείαν ἐπὶ τοὺς βαρβάρους) are mentioned in connection with the Trojan War, which is now interpreted as the first victory of Europe over Asia. This war thus becomes the emblem of the Panhellenistic movement. This can be further substantiated by the observation that as a consequence (ἐξ ὧν) of that victory the Greeks were able to prevail over Asia and to take over a number of its cities and territory, while the reverse was formerly the case.

<sup>79</sup> For the sources see Rademacher, *AS* A IV 2, G A Kennedy, "The Ancient Dispute over Rhetoric in Homer", *AJP* 78 (1957), 23-35, M. Delaunoy, *Le plan rhétorique dans l'éloquence grecque d'Homère à Démosthène*, Brussel 1959, 7-16.

<sup>80</sup> See A. Kleingünther, *ΠΡΩΤΟΣ ΕΥΡΕΤΗΣ Untersuchungen zur Geschichte einer Fragestellung*, Leipzig 1933, 47 f., 118 f. (on the comparable case of Busiris).

<sup>81</sup> See B. A. van Groningen, *In the Grip of the Past*, Leiden 1953, 27.

It should be noted that Panhellenism is here directly mentioned for the first time in the discourse as a separate topic. Earlier it served indirectly as a subsidiary motif or foil, as in the section on the Trojan War (see above). Panhellenism evidently was an important issue to Isocrates, but it does not dominate this discourse. The topic is hinted at by the use of key-concepts in earlier sections and is directly addressed in the final section: its presence reflects Isocrates' general engagement.

69 ἦν οὖν...περὶ αὐτῆς: the discourse ends with a generous gesture on the part of Isocrates. Panhellenism is potential point of departure (ἀφορμή) from which another praise of Helen can be produced. Just as Isocrates himself has used the Helen-myth and reinterpreted it to convey his educational message, so another author can use the myth and present it from the perspective of the Panhellenistic programme. That discourse, as the one delivered now, would be an instance of novelty (καινῶς λέγειν).

### 5.5. Conclusion

Isocrates' *Helen* is a discourse of programmatic character: it is a serious encomium of Helen, that reflects the educational programme of his school both on the level of moral doctrine and rhetorical technique.

As an example of rhetorical composition the discourse shows features which can be seen as practical realisations of Isocrates' theories, which have been described in the Chs. II-IV. These features may be summarized as follows:

- from the perspective of the *ιδέα*-concept, the discourse conforms to the requirements of selection (the Theseus-section, esp. the selectivity in the comparison Theseus-Heracles; exclusion of the phantom-motive), whole and part (all the discourse's sections conform to the main subject thematically and generically), plurality (the discourse consists of a number of separate sections), connection (cohesion between the sections is apparent esp. when the discourse is perceived linearly) and consistency (the discourse is conceived as a synthetic whole which is thematically orientated).

- from the perspective of the *καίρος*-concept, the discourse's sections are purposefully organized according to its end (*τέλος*): they each separately contribute to the realisation of the main thesis and in their arrangement show a gradation towards the establishment of the climactic image of the goddess Helen symbolizing the power of beauty. The sections' dimensions are delineated by the requirements of effective argumentation, in the sense that they contain what is necessary for making a complete and persuasive argument. In their effectiveness they bear witness to the advanced intellectual level (*δόξα*) of the author.

- from the perspective of the *καινός*-concept, the discourse is an innovative interpretation of the Helen-myth, which not only consists of a version hitherto unheard of, but also has a serious intention.

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## POIETIKON PRAGMA

### Isocrates' theorie van retorische compositie

#### Met een retorisch commentaar op de *Helena*

## SAMENVATTING

Het onderzoek naar de theorie en praktijk van Isocrates' retorische compositie is wenselijk vanuit twee overwegingen. Vanuit het algemene perspectief van de geschiedenis van de Griekse literatuur maakt de beschrijving van Isocrates' methoden en hun toepassing de juiste vaststelling van zijn positie ten opzichte van voorgangers, zowel dichters als proza-auteurs, mogelijk. Daarnaast voorziet dit onderzoek in een lacune: bij gebrek aan een beschrijving en analyse van Isocrates' retorische theorie en praktijk op het terrein van de compositie is het niet mogelijk zijn positie in de geschiedenis van de retorica precies te bepalen. De antieke traditie spreekt wel van een *Isocratea ratio* in de retorica, maar de inhoud daarvan is nog niet vastgesteld.

Isocrates heeft geen handboek geschreven, dat zou kunnen dienen als bron voor zijn gedachten over compositie. Zijn gepubliceerde werken dienden echter als voorbeelden van zijn geprefereerde manier van werken. Een nauwkeurige analyse van deze werken moet daarom antwoord geven op de vraag waaruit Isocrates' theorie en praktijk van retorische compositie bestond.

Deze analyse wordt vooraf gegaan door een algemene kaderstelling: er wordt aandacht gegeven aan aard en karakter van Isocrates' werken als geschreven teksten bestemd voor onderwijs in zijn school en lectuur, er wordt een verklaring gegeven voor het ontbreken van een handboek van Isocrates, en er wordt duidelijk gemaakt hoe de geleidelijke overgang naar de schriftcultuur relevant is voor het begrip van Isocrates' werken.

Uitgangspunt bij het onderzoek is steeds het programmatische geschrift *Tegen de sofisten* (or. 13), waarin Isocrates aan het begin van zijn carrière als leraar de grondslagen van de door hem geboden opleiding en vorming formuleert. In de paragrafen 14-18 ordent hij zijn retorische *paideia* aan de hand van drie fundamentele termen: *idéa*, *καίρὸς* en *καὶνός*. Deze termen vormen, in die volgorde, een sequens

van taken voor wie een geschreven betoog maakt: zij representeren de principes van Isocrates' concept van retorische compositie.

Met de termen *ἰδέα* en *εἶδος* verwijst Isocrates naar de eigenschappen van de oppervlakte-structuur van een betoog. Deze "vormen" zijn het materiaal waarmee de auteur zijn betoog opbouwt: ze staan hem ter beschikking als potentiële inhoud en vorm. Het is aan de auteur om daaruit een juiste selectie te maken. Tesamen maken de geselecteerde "vormen" het geheel van het betoog uit, zowel wat betreft de vorm (de wijze waarop de tekst zich aan de lezer presenteert) als de inhoud (de elementen waaruit de tekst is opgebouwd). De "vormen" van het betoog hebben dus betrekking op alle niveaus van de tekstconstitutie: met *ἰδέα* kan Isocrates zowel de tekst als geheel aanduiden, als één van de tekstdelen, maar ook een bepaalde wijze van expressie voor een gedachte of argument. Alle "vormen" tesamen moeten een compleet betoog uitmaken, dat een complex en synthetisch geheel vormt.

De term *καρπός* heeft betrekking op de wijze waarop de tekst en de tekstdelen in relatie tot elkaar staan. De taak van de auteur is hierbij zich te vergewissen van de criteria voor de relatieve lengten van tekstdelen. Daarbij spelen een aantal aspecten een rol: de functie van het tekstdeel in het grotere geheel van het betoog, de lengte van het tekstdeel in relatie tot de daarin behandelde inhoud, en de proporties van het betoog als geheel. De beslissingen die de auteur moet nemen ontstijgen het strict technische vlak en vereisen gevoel en geïnformeerd beoordelings-vermogen (*δόξα*). Daarmee vertegenwoordigt deze taak een gevorderd niveau in de retorische opleiding.

Aan zijn theoretische uiteenzettingen over de juiste maatvoering in een betoog legt Isocrates een filosofische en didactische notie ten grondslag. Tussen de compositie van een betoog en het maken van keuzes in het praktische leven bestaat in zijn visie een analogie: beide zijn slechts dan succesvol als een gezond oordeelsvermogen aanwezig is. De retorische opleiding heeft als doel dit oordeelsvermogen te ontwikkelen en is aldus voorwaarde voor het effectief en doelgericht optreden van de burger in de gemeenschap van de *polis*.

Isocrates' retorische proportieleer vertoont een grote gelijkenis met eendere noties uit de sfeer van het artistieke handwerk en de (beeldende) kunsten. Daarmee lijkt hij aan te sluiten bij de traditie waarbij een verwantschap wordt gezien tussen de productie (*ποίησις*) van kunstwerken en van literaire werken: beide zijn het resultaat van vakmanschap en delen een gemeenschappelijk doel en techniek.

De term *καὶνός* wordt door Isocrates gebruikt om zijn vereisten met betrekking tot de mate van originaliteit en ongebruikelijkheid van een betoog te ordenen. Op dit punt wijkt hij af van de traditie van de sofisten, die met de behandeling van onverwachte thema's de aandacht wilden vestigen op hun virtuoze taalbeheersing. Ook Isocrates eist "nieuwheid" in een betoog, op het niveau van expressie en bij de selectie van stof. Hij voegt daar echter een inhoudelijke eis aan toe: het betoog moet voor de burger relevant zijn en ondergeschikt aan het overkoepelende doel van Isocrates' werken: hun verantwoorde vormende waarde en functie.

De *Helena* is een betoog van programmatisch karakter: het biedt een lofrede op Helena en reflecteert het vormingsprogramma van Isocrates' school, zowel qua ethische doctrine als qua retorische techniek. Het betoog vertoont eigenschappen die geduid kunnen worden als praktische realisaties van Isocrates' retorische theorie:

- op het vlak van *ἰδέα* voldoet het betoog aan de vereisten van selectie (de Theseus-sectie, vooral in de vergelijking Theseus/Herakles; afwezigheid van het fantoom-motief uit de Helena-mythe), van de relatie geheel/deel (alle delen van het betoog zijn thematisch geïntegreerd), van pluraliteit (het betoog telt een aantal verschillende secties), van verbinding (cohesie tussen de secties), en van samenhang (het betoog is een synthetisch geheel);

- gezien vanuit het *καίνομός*-concept vertoont het betoog een doelgerichte organisatie van de delen: ieder afzonderlijk draagt bij aan het realiseren van de centrale stelling van het betoog. In hun ordening vormen de delen een gradatie die culmineert in het beeld van de godin Helena, die de macht der schoonheid symboliseert. De omvang van de delen is bepaald door de vereisten van effectieve argumentatie: zij bevatten alles wat bijdraagt tot een complete en overtuigende argumentatie. In zijn effectiviteit reflecteert het betoog het gevorderde intellectuele niveau (*δόξα*) van de auteur;

- de vereiste van *καὶνός* wordt zichtbaar in de innovatieve interpretatie die gegeven wordt aan de Helena-mythe. Deze interpretatie vormt niet alleen een nieuwe versie als zodanig, maar wil ook binnen het genre van het (par)adoxografisch encomium een betoog met ernstige bedoeling zijn.

## CURRICULUM VITAE

De auteur van dit proefschrift werd geboren op 21 december 1960 te Maastricht. In 1979 behaalde hij het diploma VWO (Gymnasium-B) aan het Henric van Veldeke College te Maastricht. Vanaf 1979 studeerde hij Klassieke Talen en Oude Geschiedenis aan de Rijksuniversiteit Utrecht. Op 26 augustus 1988 behaalde hij, met lof, het doctoraal examen Griekse en Latijnse Taal en Cultuur aan de Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen.

Na een dienstverband als wetenschappelijk onderzoeker aan het Papyrologisch Instituut van de Rijksuniversiteit Leiden in 1988-1989, trad hij op 1 september 1989 als assistent in opleiding (AIO) in dienst van de Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen bij het Instituut Oude Letteren. Van 1 januari tot 1 september 1994 was hij als junior docent aan hetzelfde instituut verbonden. Vanaf 1 januari 1994 is hij als toegevoegd docent verbonden aan de Universiteit Utrecht bij de vakgroep Literatuurwetenschap. Sedert 1 maart 1996 is hij bovendien aangesteld als coördinator Computer Ondersteund Onderwijs Grieks/Latijn in de faculteit der Letteren van de Universiteit Utrecht.

Hij publiceerde eerder in *Mnemosyne*, *Hermes*, *Ancient Society*, en *Kleio* over Isocrates, Plutarchus, Plato en Lysias. In 1993 verscheen van zijn hand *Lysias. Redevoeringen* (Groningen, Historische Uitgeverij), een vertaling van een selectie pleitredes. Voorts is hij als redacteur werkzaam voor de Historische Uitgeverij Groningen voor de reeks "Griekse filosofie & retorica" en verbonden aan het project "De hoofdwerken van Aristoteles in een nieuwe Nederlandse vertaling". Ook is hij lid van de redactie van het tijdschrift *Lampas*.



